

The Authority of the Word

Intersections

Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture

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The Authority of the Word

Reflecting on Image and Text
in Northern Europe, 1400–1700

Edited by

Celeste Brusati
Karl A.E. Enenkel
Walter S. Melion

Emory University, Lovis Corinth Colloquia III



B R I L L

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*Cover illustration: Isaiah and David from Cornelis Cort, after Federico Zuccaro, *The Annunciation Broadcast by Prophets of the Incarnation* (1571). Detail.*
Engraving, 46 × 68 cm. By permission of The British Museum (AN551009001) (See *Introduction*, Fig. 3 and pages 7 ff.)

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(2009), *Meditatio – Refashioning the Self. Theory and Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Intellectual Culture* (2011), *Portuguese Humanism* (2011), and *The Neo-Latin Epigram. A Learned and Witty Genre* (2009). He is a member of the editorial board of *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, *Imago figurata*, *Proteus. Studies in Early Modern Identity Formation*, *Speculum Sanitatis: Studies in Medieval and Early Modern Medical Culture* (500–1800) and general editor of *Intersections*.

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INTRODUCTION: SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY IN WORD AND IMAGE

Walter S. Melion, Celeste Brusati and Karl A.E. Enenkel

The third Lovis Corinth Colloquium, convened at Emory University in October 2009, provided the initial forum within which the historians of art, literature, and religion, whose revised papers make up this book, were invited to consider the mutual form and function, manner and meaning of texts and images, as these were conceived and deployed in Northern Europe between 1400 and 1700. Implicit in the titular epigraph, ‘Authority of the Word’, is a reference to scriptural authority and to the textual instruments – the Bible and its commentaries – that mediated access to the divine word, making it discernible and apprehensible. In early modern Europe, visual images served likewise as enabling instruments that fostered colloquy between God and men, making divine providence intelligible to human knowledge. Like texts, images partook of rhetorical forms and hermeneutic functions – typological, paraphrastic, parabolic, among others – based largely in illustrative traditions of biblical commentary. In the sixteenth century, the introduction of the emblem and its text-image apparatus further complicated the theory and practice of scriptural image-making. If the specific relation between biblical texts and images exemplified the range of possible relations between texts and images more generally, it also operated in tandem with other discursive paradigms – scribal, humanistic, antiquarian, historical, and literary, to name but a few – for the connection, complementary or otherwise, between verbal and visual media. These alternative discourses provided further lenses through which textual and pictorial practices of invention and interpretation were viewed. In this volume of *Intersections*, the dynamic interaction between scriptural image and scriptural text also supplies the *secundum comparatum*, to which other kinds of relation between image and text are implicitly compared. The authors consider various types of text-image apparatus, asking how they were employed to represent, and by representing to constitute authority, both sacred and secular.

By way of introduction, we want here to examine three pictures that incorporate sacred texts, composing words and images into templates for the possible relations between visual and verbal methods of scriptural interpretation. All three case-studies comment reflexively upon the nature of this relationship, which they also serve to exemplify. Printed images function as agents of the soul's conformation to Christ in Willem van Branteghem's celebrated Gospel harmony, the *Iesu Christi vita, iuxta quatuor Evangelistarum narrationes* of 1537 [Fig. 1].¹ The full title highlights the importance of pictorial images to the book's form and function: *The Life of Jesus Christ Skillfully Portrayed in Most Elegant Pictures Drawn from the Narratives of the Four Evangelists*. Lieven de Witte of Ghent designed and perhaps also executed the 186 oblong woodcuts that punctuate the *Iesu Christi vita*, generally as head-pieces taking up a third of the page.² Many of these prints are self-referential, in that they call attention to the use of visual images by Christ himself, who is seen to wield them as didactic tools for instilling evangelical doctrine. Plate 25, for example, illustrates *John 3:1–21*, Jesus's nighttime conversation with the Pharisee Nicodemus, whom He teaches about the kingdom of God, soon to be made visible to the eyes of faith: just as the brazen serpent was lifted up by Moses, that the Israelites might look at it and be healed, so the Son of Man, the only begotten Son of God, shall be lifted up, that they who see Him and believe may not perish but have life everlasting [Fig. 2].

¹ *Iesu Christi vita iuxta quatuor Evangelistarum narrationes, artificio graphices perquam eleganter picta, una cum totius anni Evangelis ac Epistolis, nec non pijs precationibus magna commoditate adpressis* (Antwerp, Mattheus Cromme, for Adriaen Kempe van Bouckhout: 1537), octavo. On the *Iesu Christi vita*, specifically its relation to *Dat leven ons Heeren Christi Jesu*, the Dutch edition of Van Branteghem's Gospel harmony, likewise published in 1537 by Mattheus Cromme of Antwerp, see Veldman I.M., "De boekillustratie als inspiratiebron voor de Nederlandse prentkunst van de zestiende eeuw", in Henk Duits H. – Gelderblom, A.-J. – Smits-Veldt M.B. (eds.), *Eer is het Lof des Deuchts: Opstellen over renaissance en classicisme aangeboden aan Dr. Fokke Veenstra* (Amsterdam: 1986) 261–277, esp. 263–264; and Veldman I.M. – Schaik K. van, *Verbeeld boodschap: De illustraties van Lieven de Witte bij "Dat leven ons Heeren"* (1537) (Haarlem – Brussels: 1989) 17–21. On the meditative image-theory in the *Iesu Christi vita*, see Melion W.S., *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print, 1550–1625*, Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts 1 (Philadelphia: 2009) 5–13.

² On Van Branteghem and his illustrator De Witte, see Veldman – Van Schaik, *Verbeeld boodschap* 13–16; and Rosier B.A., *The Bible in Print: Netherlandish Bible Illustration in the Sixteenth Century*, trans. C.F. Weterings, 2 vols. (Leiden: 1997) I 28–29.

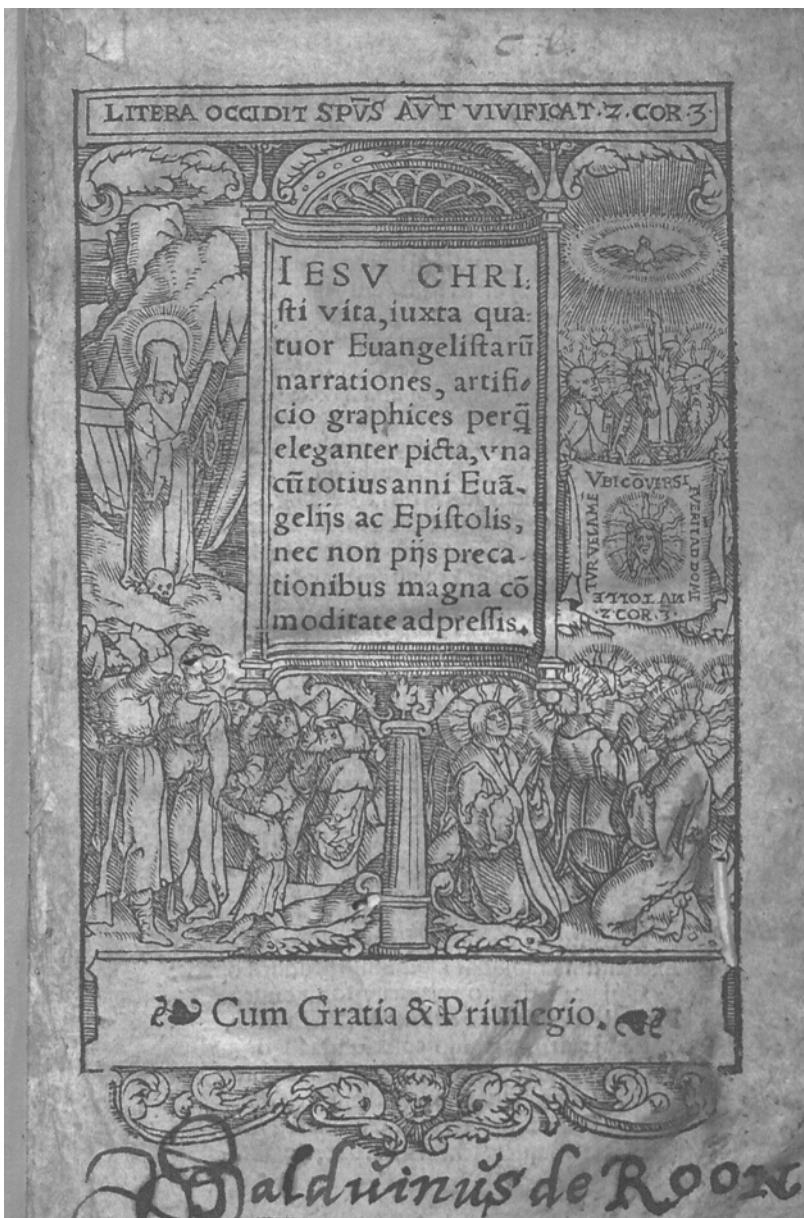


Fig. 1. Lieven de Witte, woodcut title-page to Willem van Branteghem's *Iesu Christi vita iuxta quatuor Evangelistarum narrationes, artificio graphices per quam eleganter picta, una cum totius anni Evangelii ac Epistolis, nec non piis prectionibus magna commoditate adpressis* (Antwerp, Mattheus Cromme, voor Adriaen Kempe van Bouckhout: 1537), octavo. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Maurits Sabbebilioothek.

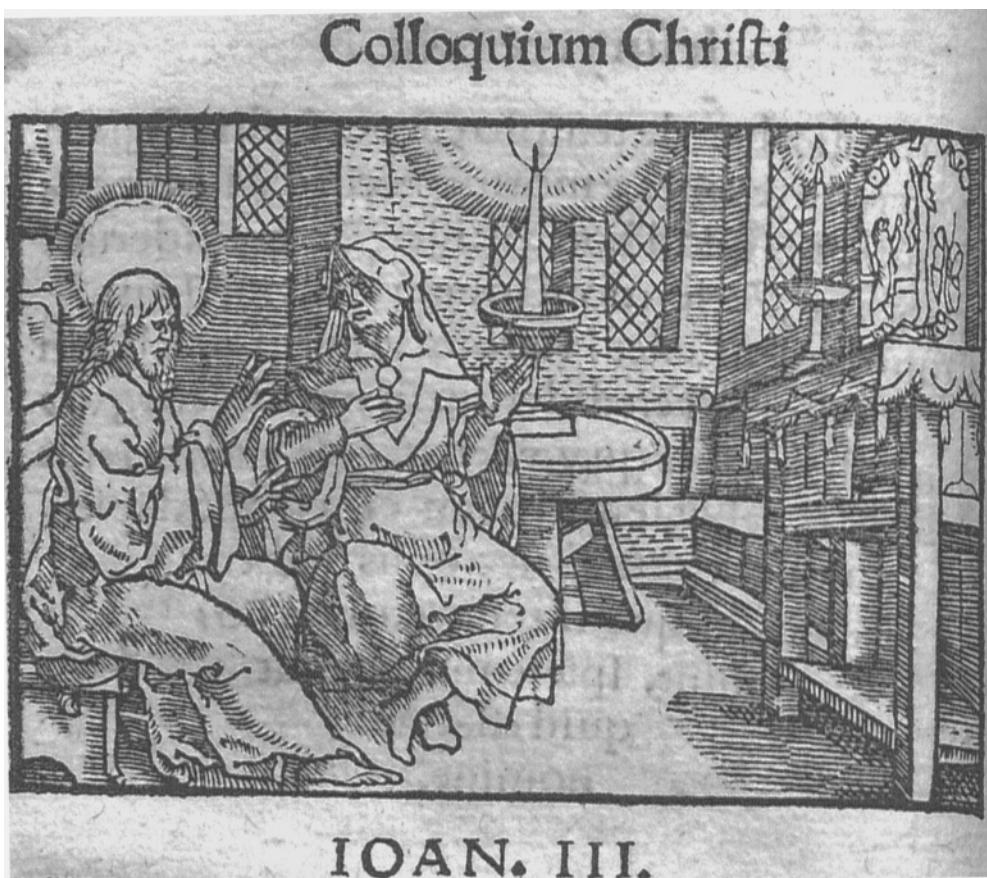


Fig. 2. Lieven de Witte, *Christ Instructs the Pharisee Nicodemus by Night* (John 3:1–21). Woodcut illustration from Willem van Branteghem's *Iesu Christi vita iuxta quatuor Evangelistarum narrationes* (Antwerp, Mattheus Cromme, voor Adriaen Kempe van Bouckhout: 1537), octavo. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Maurits Sabbebilioothek.

De Witte ingeniously illustrates this visual analogy, showing how Jesus relies upon a pictorial image to analogize Himself, as living antitype, to the brazen serpent, a merely graven image. Nicodemus sits with Christ, who gestures toward the painting, displayed on the house altar at the right. That He faces a picture of *Numbers* 21:9 indicates that this scriptural source forms the basis of the homily He is delivering; that the biblical scene appears as an image in the image underscores its status as an analogical *typus* – figurative image – tendered to clarify the doctrine that supersedes it. The plate is of course meant to be

viewed in conjunction with the biblical text it construes rather than merely illustrating. Indeed, author and artist together invite reflection on the nature and significance of scriptural images, given that Christ, here and elsewhere, authorizes their exegetical usage. In this and other ways, the book marshals text and image in tandem to constitute itself as a meditative *machina* (apparatus), that prompts the reader-viewer to reform himself on the model of Jesus's person, words, and deeds, to be discerned and imitated by the votary who engages visually and verbally with the scriptural pericopes.

Composed by De Witte, the figured title page of the *Iesu Christi vita* expounds 2 *Corinthians* 3, an excerpt from which – ‘Litera occidit spiritus autem vivificat’ – surmounts the woodcut print [Fig. 1].³ The bipartite image consists of two scenes divided by the titular plaque that prominently displays the Holy Name and refers to the Gospels and Epistles enshrining the life of Christ (*Iesu Christi vita, iuxta quatuor Evangelistarum narrationes* [...]]): at left Moses, the splendor of his face veiled, promulgates the tablets of the Law; at right the apostles, inspired by the Holy Spirit, unveil a cloth miraculously imprinted with the Holy Face surrounded by the words, ‘When they shall have turned to the Lord, the veil will be lifted’ (‘Ubi conversi fuerint ad Dominum tolletur velamen’). These words, like the apostolic act of unveiling, encapsulate the argument of 2 *Corinthians* 3, their truth revealed and verified by the divinely radiant face they enframe. Whereas the Israelites shield their eyes from the awesome sight of the Law and its illustrious messenger, the Christian faithful, beholding the image of God, are irradiated by the light of the Spirit that imbues them with luminous haloes. The two scenes illustrate the antithesis between the Old Law and the New, while the life, deeds, and doctrine of Christ, invoked and inscribed in the title, demarcate the threshold between these dispensations.

If the title page visualizes the meaning of 2 *Corinthian* 3, it does so to justify the role played by pictorial images throughout Van Branteghem's Gospel harmony. The titular print is exegetical in form and function, for it invites a specific reading of 2 *Corinthians* 3, verses 2 to 18 in particular, interpreting them as an argument for the

³ On the title-page and its iconography, see Veldman – Van Schaik, *Verbeelde boedschap* 25–27; and Melion, *Meditative Art* 5–6. On De Witte's illustrations and their reformist character, see *ibidem* 32–49.

dispensation of grace that licenses images under the sanction of the Holy Face. Fashioned by Christ, unfurled by the apostles, and beheld by the votary, this icon justifies production of further images of Christ, to be found throughout the *Iesu Christi vita*. The process of visualization, thus warranted, is seen implicitly to originate in the mystery of the Incarnation that converts Israelites who fear to behold into Christians who stare perspicaciously, the veil that covers into the veil that reveals the light of God. Moreover, the freedom of looking into the divine face both stands for and exemplifies the new liberty granted by Christ according to 2 *Corinthians* 3:17: ‘And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty’.⁴ This liberty is equated with the franchise of viewing the ‘life of Jesus Christ skillfully portrayed in most elegant pictures’, and conversely, this franchise redounds upon Scripture, influencing the reading of the *vita Iesu Christi* enshrined in the Gospels and Epistles: which is to say that images are presented as instruments in and through which the votary’s engagement with Scripture transits, complementary to the hermeneutics of scriptural reading. Accordingly, the argument of the title-page compels us to consider how dynamic was the interaction between scriptural image and scriptural text, how mutually authorizing the processes of reading and viewing could be.

The sequential relation between reading and viewing correlates to the exegetical relation between prophecy and revelation, type and anti-type, the Old and New Testaments, in Cornelis Cort’s *The Annunciation Broadcast by Prophets of the Incarnation* of 1571 [Fig. 3].⁵ Engraved

⁴ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages are cited or translated from the *Biblia Sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, ed. R. Weber, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: 1969).

⁵ On this print, see Bierens de Haan J.C.J., *L’oeuvre gravé de Cornelis Cort. Graveur hollandaise 1533–1600* (The Hague: 1948) 49–51, no. 26; Sellink M., “Cornelis Cort naar Federico Zuccaro, *De annunciatie*”, in Devisscher H. (ed.), *Fiamminghi a Roma 1508–1608. Kunstenaars uit de Nederlanden en het prinsbisdom Luik tijdens de Renaissance* [exh. cat., Paleis voor Schone Kunsten, Brussels; Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome] (Brussels: 1995) 167, no. 75; Sellink M. (compiler) – Leeflang H. (ed.), *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700. Cornelis Cort*, 3 vols. (Rotterdam – Amsterdam: 2000) I 53–65, nos. 20–22; Bury M., *The Print in Italy 1550–1620* [exh. cat., British Museum, London] (London: 2001) 114–115, no. 74; and Melion W.S., “Cornelis Cort, *Annunciation with Prophets of the Incarnation*”, in Melion W.S. – Clifton J. (eds.), *Scripture for the Eyes: Bible Illustration in Netherlandish Prints of the Sixteenth Century* [exh. cat., Museum of Biblical Art, New York; Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, Atlanta] (London – New York: 2009) 133–134, no. 15. As Bury notes, Federico was directly involved in the process of designing the print; he supplied Cort with working drawings specially executed to serve as modelli, for two of which see Gere J. *Dessins de Taddeo et Federico Zuccaro* [exh. cat., Musée du Louvre, Paris] (Paris: 1969) 47, no. 51; and Mundy E.J. (ed.),

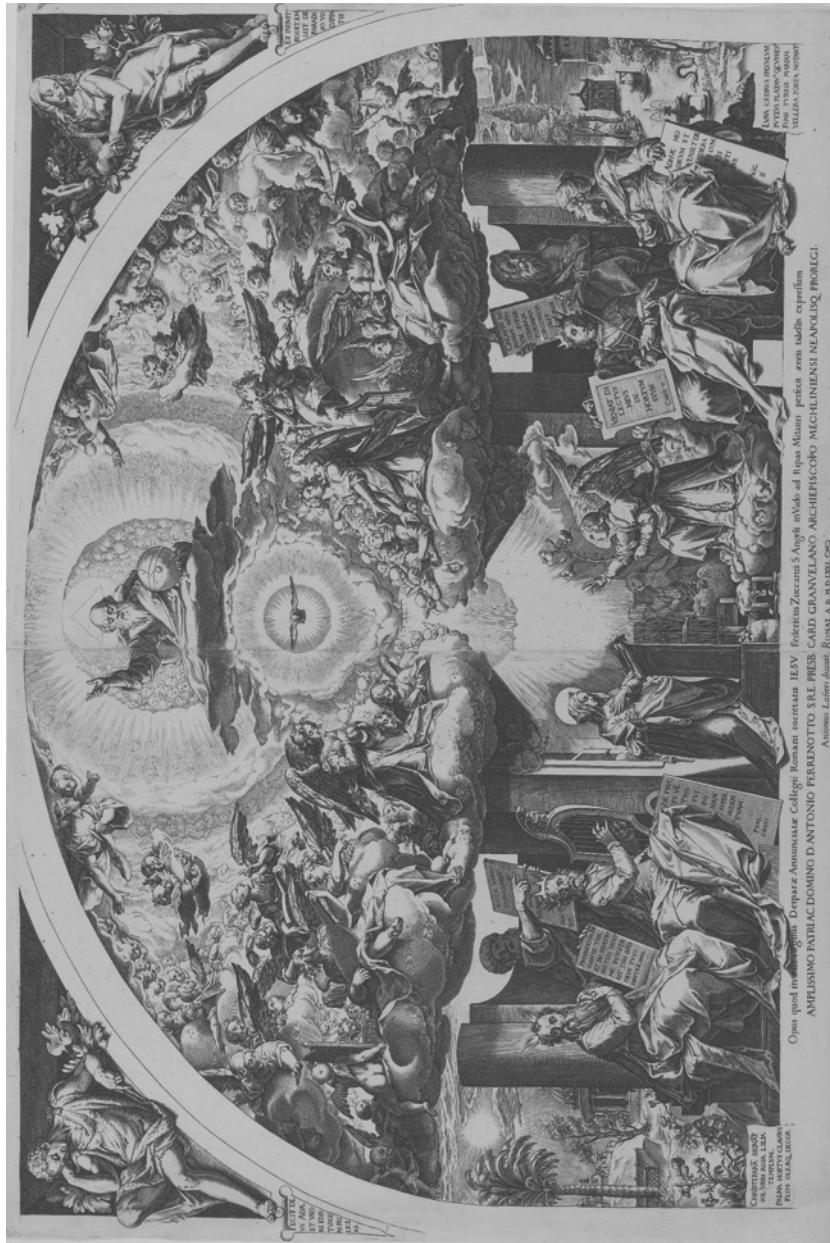


Fig. 3. Cornelis Cort, after Federico Zuccaro, *The Annunciation Broadcast by Prophets of the Incarnation* (1571). Engraving, 46 × 68 cm. By permission of The British Museum (AN551009001).

after the famous fresco by Federico Zuccaro, formerly in the tribune vault of SS. Annunziata, the collegiate church of the Jesuit Seminario Romano in Rome, this grand print contains several species of biblical text – plaques with prophecies held by their respective prophets, inscriptions from Genesis in the spandrels, and sheets of paper listing Marian emblems at extreme left and right – all of which foreshadow in one way or another the advent of Christ, invisibly bodied forth in the womb of the Virgin at the Annunciation.⁶ In addition, the print is inscribed below with an attribution of the source image to Zuccaro, of the publication to the printmaker Antoine Lafrieri in Rome, and with a dedication to Antoine Perrenot, Cardinal de Granvelle, who had just been named Viceroy of Naples. Signaled by choirs of angels, by the genuflection of the archangel Gabriel, and by the gesture of consent with which Mary marks the moment of conception, His implied presence completes the central vertical axis comprising God the Father and the Holy Spirit, the first and third persons of the Holy Trinity. The prophets flanking the annunciation scene likewise allude to His presence: their bodies rotate and their plaques incline toward the place where the Word is made flesh (Haggai's prophecy excepted), although none actually observes, as we are privileged to do, the event that inaugurates the mystery of the Incarnation. Inscribed with passages from their prophecies of this great mystery, the tablets they hold forth are shadowed (Haggai's again excepted) and thus adumbrate the overshadowing of the Virgin by the power of the Most High (*Luke* 1:35), while their bodies, though not their eyes, are partially lit at one remove by the light of the Holy Spirit flooding Mary's virtual sanctuary.

Renaissance into Baroque: Italian Master Drawings by the Zuccari 1550–1600 [exh. cat., Milwaukee Art Museum; National Academy of Design, New York] (Milwaukee: 1989) 198–200, no. 62. Cort engraved three nearly identical versions; fig. 3 illustrates New Hollstein cat. no. 21, on which see Sellink (comp.) – Leeflang (ed.), *Cornelis Cort I* 54; 60–61. On Cort, the foremost Dutch engraver of the 1560's and 1570's, see Sellink M., *Cornelis Cort: constich plaedt-snijder van Horne in Holland* [exh. cat., Museum Boijmans-Van Beuningen, Rotterdam] (Rotterdam: 1994) 6–17; idem, "Introduction", in Sellink (comp.) – Leeflang (ed.), *Cornelis Cort I XXIII–XXXIV*; and Borea E., "Roma 1565–1578: Intorno a Cornelis Cort", in Borea E. (ed.), *Fiamminghi a Roma 1508–1608. Atti del Convegno Internazionale Bruxelles 24–25 febbraio 1995* [Bollettino d'arte. Supplemento al n. 100] (Rome: 1999) 215–230.

⁶ On the church of SS. Annunziata, see Bailey G.A., *Between Renaissance and Baroque: The First Jesuit Paintings in Rome, 1565–1610* (Toronto – London: 2003) 115–116; on the lost tribune vault fresco, see Acidini Luchinat C., *Taddeo e Federico Zuccari: fratelli pittori del Cinquecento*, 2 vols. (Milan: 1998) I 255–258, 263–264; and Bailey, *Between Renaissance and Baroque* 116–117.

The prophets gaze out at the beholder (Moses, David) and up toward God (Isaiah), or they engage each other (Solomon, Jeremiah, Haggai), unlike the melancholic figures of Adam and Eve, their heads bent, as if by the heavy burden of a guilty conscience, their eyes nearly closed, their bodies turned away from the Trinitarian epiphany. Again unlike sinful Adam and Eve, who are isolated within shadowy recesses, they coalesce into groups of three (echoing the Trinity), thus implicating each other, as well as us their audience, in the joint task of discerning the effects of divine providence. Whereas the Mosaic texts from *Genesis* 2:21 and 2:23, written beneath Adam and Eve, merely recount their post-lapsarian circumstances, describing them as exiled from paradise and clothed by God in the skins of beasts, the prophetic texts, like their bearers, gesture toward the cone of radiance that pierces the heavenly cloudbank and evinces the moment of conception when the Holy Spirit, in the words of *Luke* 1:35, comes upon Mary. Indeed, the angled placards appear to reverberate with, if not exactly to coexist, the oblique rays of celestial light irradiating the Virgin, and this perhaps indicates that the prophets are themselves inspired by the spirit of prophecy. Larger in scale than Mary or Gabriel, they mediate between the beholder and the Annunciation proper. On the other hand, having been sanctified by the Spirit, they are also less like us: slightly removed from the audience they address, they are smaller and thus more distant than Adam and Eve, who project furthest into the space of the beholder.

Most distant are the emblematic devices punctuating the sunlit landscape at left and the moonlit landscape at right. The sheets of paper affixed to these vistas identify them as compilations of Marian virtues, visualized in the imagery of *Canticle* 6:9 ('Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun?'), *Wisdom* 7:26 ('For she is the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of His goodness'), *Ecclesiasticus* 24:18–19 ('I was exalted like a palm tree in Cades, and as a rose plant in Jericho, as a fair olive tree in the plains'), and other passages from the Books of Wisdom. They forecast the coming of Mary and emphasize that she is to be the *imago* of divine virtue, and as such, of Christ its living embodiment. The left-hand text binds these symbols to the nuptials of Mary and Jesus, who are to be united bodily and spiritually at the Annunciation, when she accedes to the divine will by declaring, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord' (*Luke* 1:38): 'The sun, city, rose, lily, temple, palm, enclosed garden, flower, and beauty

of the olive signify the bridesmaid of Christ' ('Christi para[nympham] signant'). The right-hand text, using the verb *notare* (illustrate, represent, express by pictorial means), puts stress on the visual character of the sapiential symbols that portray Mary: 'The moon, cedar, mirror, well, plane-tree, cypress, fountain, tower, fleece, and portal represent Mary' ('Mariam [...] notant').

Image and text thus work in concert to demarcate three stages in the reader-viewer's virtual journey toward the manifestation of Christ. Cued by the proximity of Adam and Eve, he begins in the spandrels, where the first parents – mournful, dressed in pelts, and posed against fig-like branches from the tree of forbidden knowledge – allude to original sin, which necessitates the salvation of humankind. Their downcast eyes, nearly shut, imply that they are still far from seeing the advent of Christ. This condition of spiritual distance corresponds to the conditions of viewing that obtain when the beholder, looking closely at the spandrels, shifts the axial scene of Annunciation to the periphery of his field of vision. The passages from Genesis similarly allude to the sinful state of humankind just after the fall, before the era of the prophets who operate under the Law. The emblematic landscapes at left and right bring us closer to the era of grace, which to some extent may now be discerned, but only distantly, symbolically, and at several removes. Dotted with Marian devices, these landscapes require us to mobilize our eyes, hearts, and minds, as we attend to images of the Virgin that in turn signify her privilege of imaging Christ. That these emblems are doubly representational – images of images – drives home the point that they as yet merely intimate, rather than making indisputably evident, the coming of Christ. Since the Books of Wisdom are held to be spoken in the voice of Christ, the solar and lunar epithets also anticipate the Christocentric prophecies that the six prophets of the Incarnation, positioned closer to the viewer, to the Trinity, and to the Annunciation, bring forward more emphatically and declaratively. Their gestures are clearly based on that of God the Father: as He raises one arm to set in motion the incarnation of the Word, so do they gesture toward their God-given words, and as He holds the orb of the world, so do they grasp their placards (or in David's case, the lyre, instrument of sung prophecy), addressing the world at large. They announce their prophecies in a prolepsis of the Annunciation, and their positions within two apsidal chapels (framed by columnar piers) on either side of the choir-like sanctuary housing Mary and Gabriel, suggests that they co-inhabit a basilica that stands for their communal

membership, before the fact as it were, in the church to be established by Christ. The light flooding the sanctuary in token of His presence jointly symbolizes, or better, prefigures the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist to be celebrated daily within just such an ecclesial setting. This setting, seen in these terms, amplifies the theme of prophecy by compelling us to read the tablets as prognoses of Christ and His Church. The larger context for this picture, it is worth recalling, was the Jesuit church of Santa Maria Annunziata, upon whose likeness to Mary as the habitation of God, Zuccaro's fresco commented. The dedicatory inscription on Cort's engraving ('opus quod in aede Virginis Deiparae Annuntiatae Collegii Romani societatis Iesu') continues to evoke and connote these surroundings.

The proximity of prophetic words to the Word made flesh visually signifies, within the itinerary we have been tracking, that the reader-viewer has reached the threshold of revelation, when scriptures shall be supplanted by their very source, progenitors by Christ Himself. But what we actually encounter is the white blankness of divine light emanating from on high and making brightly visible the Virgin as agent and index of the mystery transpiring invisibly and yet discernibly before us. The effect of whiteness is produced by a zone of unprinted paper, beside which the figures of Mary and Gabriel seem to take shape as images fashioned from linear networks of swelling, tapering, and concentric hatchings. This pictorial reflex complements the sapiential references to Mary as the *imago bonitatis illius*, to be found in the landscapes at left and right: together reflex and references imply that under the new dispensation of Christ, God may be known in and through images that represent His presence. This notion derives from 2 Corinthians 4:4 and Colossians 1:15, proof texts that famously designate Christ as the *imago Dei* and 'imago Dei invisibilis primogenitus omnis creaturae', who in Himself makes God visible and thereby licenses other images of Him. The absence of textual inscriptions from the print's middle axis points up the crucial insight that the divine will is here expressing itself visually rather than verbally. But if the central scene implicitly associates the Incarnation with the principle of divine representation, it also reconciles this endorsement of sacred imagery with an explicit reference to the practice of *lectio divina* and to the relevance of Scripture in the unfolding of divine mysteries. The Virgin, as the position of her head and eyes indicates, was reading when Gabriel first alighted. The book lying open atop her prie-dieu is presumably scriptural, a conclusion we are invited to draw by the implied

parallel between our reading of the print's pentateuchal, sapiential, and prophetic texts, and hers of the book. Seen in this way, her dual gesture – left hand to heart, right raised and extended – connotes not only assent and wonder at the angel's message, but also recognition and surprise that she is the instrument through whom the scriptural prophecies of the Messiah are fulfilled. That her gestures resonate with those of God the Father and the prophets further intimates that she is in synch with the word of God and all it portends. The yarnwinder and bags of yarn at the base of the prie-dieu perhaps connote her ability to gather the various pericopes into a continual strand of scriptural allusion foretelling herself and Christ. In the *Annunciation Broadcast by Prophets of the Incarnation*, therefore, the interaction between word and image, reading and viewing, proves to be circular: the biblical texts that prognosticate Christ are invoked, not abrogated, at the moment of His coming, and the mystery of the Incarnation is seen to fulfill, and by fulfilling to advocate, the covenantal promises recorded in the Old Testament. Tacitly inferred by all this, of course, is the well-known pronouncement of Christ in *Matthew* 5:17: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them".

The pairing of the Annunciation with the six prophecies cited in the print derives not from any liturgical source but from the *Glossa ordinaria et interlinearis*, which was usually printed with Nicholas of Lyra's *Postillae*, Matthias Döring's *Replica*, and Paul of Burgos's *Additiones*, following the pattern set by the Paganus de Paganinis's Venetian edition of 1495 and Johann Froben, Johannes Petri, and Johann Amerbach's Basel edition of 1498.⁷ Of these six, only *Isaiah* 7:14 is traditionally recited to commemorate the mystery of the Incarnation: the Tridentine *Missale Romanum* prescribes it as the *lectio* for the fourth ember day in Advent, within the stational liturgy of Saint Mary Major, and also for the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25);⁸ the Tridentine *Breviarium Romanum* makes it the third *lectio* for the Saturday of the first week of Advent, and the first *lectio* for the Feast of the Annuncia-

⁷ On printed editions of the *Glossa*, see Froehlic K., "The Printed Gloss", in *Biblia Latina cum glossa ordinaria. Facsimile Reprint of the Editio Princeps (Adolph Rusch of Strassburg 1480/81)*, introd. M.T. Gibson – K. Froehlic, 4 vols. (Turnhout: 1992) I, pp. XII–XXVI.

⁸ *Missale Romanum, ex decreto Sacrosancti Concilij Tridentini restitutum, Pii V. Pont. Max. Iussu editum* (Venice, Jonannes Variscus, Haeredes Bartholomaei Faleti et Socii: 1571) 6, 373.

tion.⁹ The *Glossa* alone, then, is the exegetical source for the inventive linking of these prophecies to each other and to the Annunciation. It is especially surprising to find Moses included among the prophets of the Incarnation, but the *Glossa* justifies his presence, and it also explains certain distinctive features of the prophets – Moses's curious gesture of self-pointing, Solomon's sidelong glance at David, and Jeremiah and Haggai's conversation, as well as the latter's placard, which is brightly lit, whereas the others are shadowed.¹⁰ These elements function as visual prompts that direct us to specific glosses on the prophecies in question. They form part of a bidirectional apparatus that leads from the exegetical text to the biblical image, urging us to read the latter through the former, and conversely, from image to text, causing us to search in the *Glossa* for the reasons why Moses, Solomon, Jeremiah, and Haggai should be represented as they are.

The sequence of prophets begins at left with Moses, who not only stares at the viewer, but also points at himself. He carries the partial text of *Deuteronomy* 18:15, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren’ (‘propheta de gente tua & de fratribus tuis sicut me’). The *Glossa* links this prophecy to the advent of Christ and thereby to the Annunciation: ‘Although [this prophecy] could be interpreted historically by reference to the prophets whom the spirit of God supplied to the people Israel after Moses, it may better be taken as a reference to [Christ] the Lord of the prophets, about whom the multitude, having been made full [by the miracle of the loaves and fishes], said (*John* 6:14): “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!” And elsewhere (*Luke* 7:16): “A great prophet has arisen among us!”’¹¹ Nicholas of Lyra’s postils, however, adding that ‘prophetic revelation’ (‘prophetica revelatio’) must supplement ‘the limit of the Law’ (‘legis determinatio’),

⁹ *Breviarium Romanum, ex decreto Sacrosancti Concilij Tridentini restitutum, Pii V. Pont. Max. Iussu editum* (Antwerp, Ex officina Christophori Plantini: 1572) 123, 654.

¹⁰ Moses is sometimes juxtaposed to Mary, not as a prophet but as a type: as he received the Law, so she received the Christ.

¹¹ *Biblia Sacra cum glossis, interlineari, et ordinaria, Nicolai Lyrani Postilla, ac Moralitatibus, Bergensis Additionibus, et Thoringi Replicis*, 7 vols. (Venice, Società dell’Aquila [Giovanni Varisco & Comp.]: 1588) I, fol. 351v, col. E: ‘Licet historialiter de prophetis accipi possit, qui post Moysen in populo Israel repleti sunt spiritu Dei: melius tamen de Domino prophetarum accipitur, de quo turbae ab ipso satiatae dixerunt: Hic est vere propheta, qui venturus est in mundum. Et alibi: Propheta magnus surrexit in nobis’.

interpret *Deuteronomy* 18:15 as an allusion to Moses, rather than to Christ:

For in the first place, Moses was trying to persuade the people that they, unlike other nations, should not consult soothsayers or familiar spirits, whenever it suited them to know the future or other sorts of contingency. For he promised them that whenever needful, they could know such things through divine revelation, that is, through a prophet among them, to whom God would reveal those things, which they could thus know without sin.¹²

Moses is one such prophet, through whom the divine law and its precepts are mediated as a guide to life ('ad habendam notitiam de lege divina et praeceptis eius, ad hoc ut vita populi ordinaretur'). When Moses reiterates his utterance, in *Deuteronomy* 18:18, saying, 'I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren' ('de medio fratrum suorum similem tui'), he this time speaks of Christ, who shall arise 'de medio fratrum', that is, from the seed of David, and shall be 'similem tui', that is, a true man like unto Moses and his fellow men.¹³ The *Glossa* and postils, then, provide alternate readings of *Deuteronomy* 18:15, that construe it as a reference to Moses, but also to Christ. This explains why in the print Moses forecasts the mystery of the Incarnation, tilting his plaque toward the scene of Annunciation, and at the same time gestures toward himself. He directs his gaze outward because the prophet's vocation, as defined by the postils to *Deuteronomy* 18:15–16 – 'him you shall heed, just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb' – requires him to speak directly to the people, in the place of God, whose presence and voice are too fearsome to be endured: 'As is found in *Exodus* [20:18]: Since they could no longer endure the voice of God speaking, they besought [Him] to speak to them through Moses, which [request] was granted: and not only through Moses, but also through other prophets in generations to

¹² Ibidem, fol. 352r, col. A: 'In primo enim loco intendebat Moyses inducere populum ad hoc, quod futura contingentia et alia huiusmodi, quorum notitiam habere conveniret populo, non quaererent scire ab ariolis seu pythonibus et huiusmodi, sicut aliae gentes quaerebant. Promittebat enim eis, quod talia, quando oportuisset, potuisent scire per revelationem divinam, scilicet per prophetam de propria gente, cui Deus ea revelaret, et sic sine peccato scirent illa'.

¹³ Ibidem, cols. A and C. The postil notes by way of clarification that the phrase 'similem tui' cannot be translated 'another prophet like you', since Moses alone was raised up for the giving of the Law.

come, as for example, Joshua, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others'.¹⁴ Moses sits first among the double file of prophets, which reading read left to right concludes with Haggai, because he initiates the era of prophecy, as this postillated gloss affirms.

He deserves pride of place, furthermore, since his statement presages the doctrine of Christ and fosters faith in Him. Nicholas of Lyra makes this claim on the basis of two passages from the Gospels, the first of which, *Mark* 16:16, appeals to the authority of Moses ('unde ad illam autoritatem Mosaycam referenda sunt ista verba'): when Christ declares, 'He who is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned', He is paraphrasing *Deuteronomy* 18:19, 'And he that will not hear his words, which he shall speak in my name, I will be the revenger'.¹⁵ More importantly, in *John* 5:46, Christ draws a parallel between Himself and Moses: 'For if you did believe in Moses, you would perhaps believe me also: for he wrote of me'. This assertion follows from His earlier remark (*John* 5:19), that the scriptures 'give testimony of Him' ('quae testimonium perhibent de me'). The postils to *Deuteronomy* 18:15–19 therefore come to the conclusion that Moses wrote 'to secure faith in Christ' ('scilicet ut mihi [Iesu] crederetis'). It is Christ Himself who makes this revelation, as Nicholas of Lyra emphasizes: 'For not in the whole of Pentateuch, but only in that place [*John* 5:46], may one read that Moses taught in order that Christ might be believed'.¹⁶ The implication is that this reading of *Pentateuch* is authoritative because Jesus has licensed us to discern Him in the prophet's every pronouncement. In the *Annunciation Broadcast by Prophets of the Incarnation*, the close relation between Christ and His prophet is stressed by the similarity between the self-referential gestures of Moses and Mary: just as it indicates how she is made full with Christ, so too by analogy it suggests that He permeates Moses, transforming him into His privileged spokesman.

Bearing the partial text of *Isaiah* 7:14, 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son', Isaiah stands at left, behind the seated figures of Moses and David, his hand brightly spotlit, face shadowed, and eyes

¹⁴ Ibidem, fol. 351v, col. E: 'Ut habetur in Exo[do], quia non poterant ultra sustinere verba Dei loquentis, petierunt quod loqueretur eis per Moysen, quod fuit eis concessum, et non solum per Moysen, sed etiam per alios prophetas in diversis generationibus succedentes. Ut patet de Iosue, Samuele, Esaia, Ieremia, et aliis'.

¹⁵ Ibidem, fol. 352r, cols. A and C.

¹⁶ Ibidem, fol. 352r, col. C: 'non tamen legitur in toto Pentateuco, quod Moyses praeciperet, ut crederetur Christo, nisi in hoc loco tantum'.

upraised (either toward God, or alternatively, Adam). He points at the Annunciation more emphatically than any of his fellow prophets. The clarity of this deictic gesture, which extends from darkness into the light, precisely illustrates the notion that the prophecy beginning, ‘Ecce virgo concipiet’, unlike other prophecies, was not spoken darkly *per aenigmata*, but instead forecasts the arrival of a true and actual virgin, who will yet miraculously bear a son: ‘No longer shall he speak in enigmas: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive” – this will be a thing both new and marvelous’.¹⁷ The sign thus given shall be a clear signal, indisputable even by the ungrateful or unwilling, of the liberation from sin to be effected by the Father through Christ (‘signum scilicet liberationis vestrae consequenter [...], quia Deus multa bona facit ingratis et invitis’).¹⁸ The heavily postillated glosses to *Isaiah* 7:14 argue at length against several mistaken readings of this passage, that identify the son to be born as Ezechias, heir to Achaz, king of Judah (the recipient of Isaiah’s prophecy), or as the son of Isaiah himself, who shall be engendered as a prefiguration of the Messiah (‘generatum in typum salvatoris’). Instead, the *Glossa* affirms the reading adduced in *Matthew* 1:22–23, where *Isaiah* 7:14 is cited to verify that the child Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit: ‘All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel”’.¹⁹ This interpretation supersedes all others, since the evangelist speaks with supreme authority, having been inspired by the Holy Spirit to a greater extent than were any prophets of the Old Testament (‘cum Matthaeus apostolus et evangelista spiritu sancto plenus magis quam fuerunt prophetae veteris testimenti’). Consequently, ‘the only true and Catholic reading’ of *Isaiah* 7:14 (‘expositionem catholicam et veram’) construes it as a prophecy of what transpires at the Annunciation: ‘And that [passage] is accordingly expounded by Catholic theologians: “Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son”, that is, the

¹⁷ Ibidem IV, fol. 19r, col. B: ‘Non amplius loquetur vobis per aenigmata: ecce virgo concipiet, hoc erit novum et mirabile’.

¹⁸ Ibidem IV, fol. 19r, col. D.

¹⁹ Ibidem IV, fol. 19v, col. H: ‘Hoc autem totum factum est, ut adimpleretur quod dictum est a domino per prophetam dicentem: ecce virgo habebit in utero et pariet filium, et vocabitur nomen eius Emmanuel’.

blessed Virgin Mary, made known by the prophets, who conceived and gave birth and still remained a virgin'.²⁰

Seated in front of Isaiah, David plays the lyre, the partial text of *Psalm 131:11*, 'of the fruit of thy womb I will set upon thy throne', propped up beside him. The *Glossa* avers that the promises made in this psalm are addressed to the Church ('promissiones Dei, factas aedificatae Sion, id est ecclesiae'), and that 'David speaks' bi-vocally – 'as himself but also in the person of Christ' ('et loquitur David in sua vel in totius Christi persona').²¹ An interlinear gloss interpolates Augustine's observation that David uses the feminine reference 'de fructu ventris tui', rather than the masculine 'de fructu femoris tui' ('of the fruit of your thigh'), 'because Christ was to be born of a virginal woman' ('quia de foemina natus est Christus, [...] id est ad quam vir non accessit').²² The psalmist's prophecy is compared to the words of Gabriel, cited in *Luke 1:32*: 'and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David'. Gabriel is predicting, states the glossarist, that what David governed temporally, Christ shall govern spiritually ('quia quos David temporaliter rexit, Christus spiritualiter').²³ The postills develop this assertion, adding that the psalmist's message is both temporal and spiritual: his prophecy is fulfilled by Solomon, whom Nathan had confirmed in *2 Kings 7:12–13* as the heir chosen by God to come forth from the body of David and make certain his kingdom; 'more perfectly, the prophecy is fulfilled by Christ, his descendant in the flesh' ('multo perfectius in Christo descendente a David secundum carnem'), 'of whom Solomon is a mere figure, and in whom his reign shall be perpetuated' ('cuius Salomon figura fuit, et in quo David regni accepit perpetuitatem').²⁴ Furthermore, the promise of succession pertains to the spiritual sons to be engendered by the doctrine of Christ and sustained by His Church ('id est de filiis tuis spiritualibus, nutritis tua doctrina').²⁵ These exegeses help to elucidate why the prophets are gathered in an ecclesial space, and also why David is positioned closest to Mary, why his words 'de fructu ventris tui' are nearly contiguous

²⁰ Ibidem: 'Et secundum hoc sic exponitur a doctoribus catholicis: ecce virgo concepit et pariet filium, id est beata virgo Maria a prophetis denuntiata, quae concepit et peperit manens virgo'.

²¹ Ibidem III, fol. 285r, col. A.

²² Ibidem III, fol. 285r, cols. A and C.

²³ Ibidem III, fol. 285r, col. A.

²⁴ Ibidem III, fol. 285r, col. C.

²⁵ Ibidem III, fol. 285r, col. D.

to her belly, and why he seems to serenade her. She is the agent who assures his lineage physically ('secundum carnem'), spiritually ('de filijs tuis'), and in perpetuity ('regni [...] perpetuitatem').

The relevance of *Psalm* 131:11 to Solomon perhaps explains why he casts a sidelong glance at David. He sits adjacent to Gabriel, bearing the partial text of *Canticle* 5:1, 'Let my beloved come into his garden'. Holding the scepter that identifies him as his father's anointed successor, he points in the direction of Mary's belly, for his prophecy concerns her womb, indeed her entire person, which shall offer a place of refuge, pleasure, and habitation to Christ. In this respect, he resembles Gabriel, who announces the coming of Christ the King, while pointing at Mary with one hand and raising a scepter-like lily in the other. The postils rationalize his regal pose and attributes: since 'in Scripture, the actions and passions of the faithful are sometimes attributed to God Himself', so here Solomon can stand for the kingship of Christ, to whom, according to Gabriel, God shall give the 'throne of his father David', that He may 'reign over the house of Jacob for ever'.²⁶ An interlinear gloss makes clear that Solomon is speaking of Christ: the figure of 'the beloved' ('dilectus meus') is identified with Him 'Who has come to lay the fundament of faith, hope, and charity' ('qui me in fundamento fidei, spei et charitatis collocavit').²⁷

Behind Solomon stands Jeremiah, who turns toward Haggai, seated to his left. He displays the partial text of *Jeremiah* 31:22, 'For the Lord has created a new thing on the earth: a woman encompasses a man'. The *Glossa* interprets this passage in light of the previous verse, 'Return, O virgin Israel', as a reference to Christ, begotten of the Virgin; as occurred under the old dispensation, God shall once again wed the people of Israel to Himself, this time embracing them within the larger community of the Church to be founded by the Son: 'It seems more apt to me that all this be referred to the time of the New Testament, when a virgin birth shall have brought forth a Saviour to the world, that in consequence the maiden Israel ('virgo Israel'), whom the Lord betrothed to Himself in justice, judgment, and compassion, may be reconciled to the citizens of the Church and cease aimlessly to traverse

²⁶ Ibidem III, fol. 362r, col. D: 'quia actus et passiones fidelium in scriptura ali quando attribuuntur ipsi Deo'.

²⁷ Ibidem III, fol. 362r, cols. B and D.

the excesses of the world'.²⁸ *Jeremiah* 31:22, declare the postillated glosses, foretells how Christ incarnate, the quintessence of knowledge and virtue, shall in an instant be conceived within the womb of Mary ('Christum virum perfectum scientiis et virtutibus ab instanti incarnationis in utero suo circundedit'). As the threshold of incarnation initiates the life of the spirit, so too it announces the renunciation of the life of the flesh ('quasi dicat debet dimiti vita carnalis adveniente Christi incarnatione, et inchoari spiritualis').²⁹

Jeremiah addresses Haggai, whose placard, unlike those of his peers, is bathed in the light of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, Haggai is himself strongly illuminated, whereas Jeremiah is the most deeply shadowed of the prophets. He presents the partial text of *Haggai* 2:7–8: 'Yet one little while [...] and the desired of all nations shall come forth'. The two prophets are seen to converse because both their prophecies have to do with the founding of the universal Church made possible by the longed-for advent of Christ. As the *Glossa* puts it: 'In whose advent the Church shall be filled with a greater glory than was the Synagogue, just as Christ the Son is greater in the Church, than was Moses the servant in the Synagogue'.³⁰ This reference to the glorious coming of Christ accounts for the brightness of the pericope held by Haggai. The extract shines all the more brightly by comparison with his counterpart's shaded figure and placard, as if the mystery of the Incarnation foretold by Jeremiah were coming gloriously to fruition in the prophecy promulgated by his successor Haggai. This implied transition from one prophecy to another, accentuated by the prophets' mutual engagement, illustrates the argument of the *Glossa*, which traces the development of divine revelation from the time of Moses to that of the prophets, and thence to the time of Christ.

The first stage in this progression is marked by the natural signs, perceptible but obscurely legible, with which God made known 'figuratively' ('in figura') the giving of the Law to Moses – motions of the

²⁸ Ibidem IV, fol. 153v, col. E: 'Mihi tamen aptius videtur ad novi testamenti tempus cuncta referre, in quo virginis partus universo mundo edidit Salvatorem, ut virgo Israel quam sibi dominus despondit in iustitia et in iudicio et misericordia post pollutiones pristinas revertatur ad civitates ecclesiae, et desinat vagari per luxus seculi'.

²⁹ Ibidem IV, fol. 153v, col. G.

³⁰ Ibidem IV, fol. 403v, col. F: 'In cuius adventu implebitur ecclesia gloria maiore quam fuit in synagoga, sicut maior est Christus filius in ecclesia quam Moyses servus in synagoga'.

sky, sea, and earth, mists, storms, and the darkness of night. There follows the relative clarity of the prophecies uttered by the men and women divinely appointed to restore the wavering faith of the chosen people: ‘And therefore [through Haggai] the people, living in the hollows of the land, are called, that they might accomplish a spiritual work in the house of God, and know that He is a father to them and works spiritually among them: which formerly he covenanted *in figura* to the people fleeing from Egypt’.³¹ Finally, ‘desired by all peoples’, there comes the Christ, whose glory – clearer, brighter, and greater – shall eclipse that of the prophets, and whose redemptive Passion shall stir the elements more mightily than during the time of Moses: ‘And I Who caused these [commotions] in the giving of the Old Law, shall move heaven and earth still more in the time of the Passion – when [at the Crucifixion] heaven is obscured by darkness, the land is torn asunder, and the tombs are opened. [...] And by those commotions, I shall move to faith all peoples, for “their sound hath gone forth into all the earth” (*Psalm 18:5*). And that shall occur when He comes who is desired by all nations’.³² Unlike the wondrous signs that bore witness to the hidden presence of God the Lawgiver on Mount Sinai, these marvels are meant to reveal the discernible presence of Christ, who now fulfills what the Law had merely promised. The *Glossa* further insists that thus disclosed, the glory of Christ is made equally, if not more apparent in Scripture, the literal and spiritual senses of which may be gleaned exegetically: ‘And this glory shall be given in silver, that is, the eloquence of the scriptures, and in gold, that is, their hidden sense that abides within the heart[s] of the saints’.³³ As a marginal note indicates, the glossarist is paraphrasing *Hebrews 12:18–24*, in which Paul tracks the advance from the Old Law to the New, from a God Whose fearful words must perforce be obscured by tangible

³¹ Ibidem: ‘Vocatur ergo et populus. qui in concavis terrenorum habitabat, ut faciat opus spirituale in domo Dei et sciat Deum esse parentem sibi et facientem spiritualiter in ipsis: quod quandam in figura paciscebatur de Aegypto egressientibus’.

³² Ibidem: ‘Et qui haec feci in datione veteris legis, adhuc movebo caelum et terram tempore passionis. Caelum, quando sole obscurato tenebrae factae sunt. Terram, quando petrae scissae sunt, et monumenta aperta sunt. [...] Et illis commotis movebo ad fidem omnes Gentes, quia in omnem terram exivit sonus eorum. Et hoc erit, quando veniet desideratus cunctis Gentibus’.

³³ Ibidem: ‘Et haec Gloria dabitur per argentum, id est eloquia scripturarum, et aurum, id est occultum sensum, qui versatur in pectore sanctorum’.

portents, to Christ who delivers a new covenant based not in fear but in the scriptural message of love:

For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire, and darkness, gloom, and a tempest, and a voice whose words made the hearers entreat that no further messages be spoken to them. For they could not endure the order that was given [...] Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear”. But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born, who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel.

In the *Annunciation Broadcast by Prophets of the Incarnation*, Haggai sits last in the sequence, which read left to right leads from Moses, recipient of the Law, to the bright prophecy of the Incarnation that immediately prefaces the central advent of Christ. This sequence and the luminous tablet that serves as its climax illustrate the *Glossa*'s reading of *Haggai* 2:7–8: the passage is seen to refer to the relation between Mosaic *figura* and prophetic utterance, that anticipates the further relation between prophecy and the Gospel of Christ. Taken from *Hebrews* 12:18–24, the print's imagery of the heavenly Jerusalem, of festal choirs of angels, of the assembly of 'first-born' prophets who prepare the way for Christ, follows the glossarist's reading of *Haggai* 2:7–8 as a premonitory distillation of the Pauline epistle. Additionally, the print's allusion to the Eucharist derives from the postils, that interpret the manifestation of Christ in the sacrament as the continual fulfillment of Haggai's prophecy:

"And He shall come, Who is desired by all nations, and I shall fill that house with glory". Which was fulfilled, when Christ was offered in that [house]: and so now is the Church filled with glory daily through the offering of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist.³⁴

The complex dynamics of word and image resonate through the double file of prophets, whose motions serve as exegetical cues, prompting the viewer to collate their prophecies in light of the *Glossa*, and thence

³⁴ Ibidem IV, fol. 404r, col. D: 'Quod fuit impletum, quando Christus fuit oblatus in ea: et sic modo impletur ecclesia gloria, quotidie per oblationem Christi in sacramento eucharistiae'.

to discover arguments, pointed up visually, about the nature of divine revelation before, during, and after the Law. The prophets operate diachronically, in a sequence initiated by Moses, but also synchronically, as inflections of Mary and Gabriel and as portents of the mystery of the Incarnation. Conjoined with the scene of Annunciation, they are authorized visually as prophets of the advent of Christ and of the Holy Trinity. This holds specially true of Moses, whom the textual tradition does not usually associate with the Incarnation. If the intertextual fabric woven by reference to the *Glossa* gives prominence to the theme of Advent, the pictorial image is fabricated from alternative and complementary themes: it consists of distinct zones – the spandrels external to the archway, the landscapes at left and right, the platform on which sit the prophets, the choir-like sanctuary where Mary and Gabriel meet, the heavenly glory housing the Father and the Spirit – that allow the viewer to track stages in the history of salvation, leading from Adam and Eve, whose vision is occluded, to emblems of the Virgin, distantly glimpsed, to the prophets, who gaze firmly at us, each other, or heavenward, to Mary, who discerns the fulfillment of their prophecies, and to heaven, whence angels behold and serenade the Trinity. Beginning with Adam and Eve, and with the theme of vision obscured by sin, this itinerary reaches its climax in Mary, the new Eve, whose humbly lowered eyes function as indices of that spiritual vision, with which she bears internal witness to the coming of Christ, as foretold by the prophets.

The notion that Scripture works in and through images that Christ Himself licenses as instruments of devotion constitutes a central argument of Jan David's *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (*Twelve Mirrors Arranged for the Use of Those Who Desire at Length to See God*) [Fig. 4].³⁵ Published by Jan Moretus in 1610, this meditative treatise was the fifth of five Latin emblem

³⁵ On the *Duodecim specula*, see Sommervogel C., S.J., *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 11 vols. (Brussels – Paris: 1890–1932) II, col. 1851, no. 20; and Daly P.M. – Richard Dimler G., S.J. (eds.), *Corpus librorum emblematum: The Jesuit Series*, 6 vols. (Montreal – Toronto – London: 1997–2007) I 147–149. On David, one of the foremost Jesuit emblematists, see Andriessen J., “Johannes David”, in Duverger J. (ed.), *Nationaal biografisch woordenboek I* (Brussels: 1964) 377–383; idem, “Pater Joannes David S.J. (1564–1613)”, *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 30 (1956) 113–155; idem, “Leven en werk van Johannes David S.J.”, *West-Vlaanderen* 12 (1963) 220–224; and Porteman K. – Smits-Veldt M.B., *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen* (Amsterdam: 2008) 294–296.

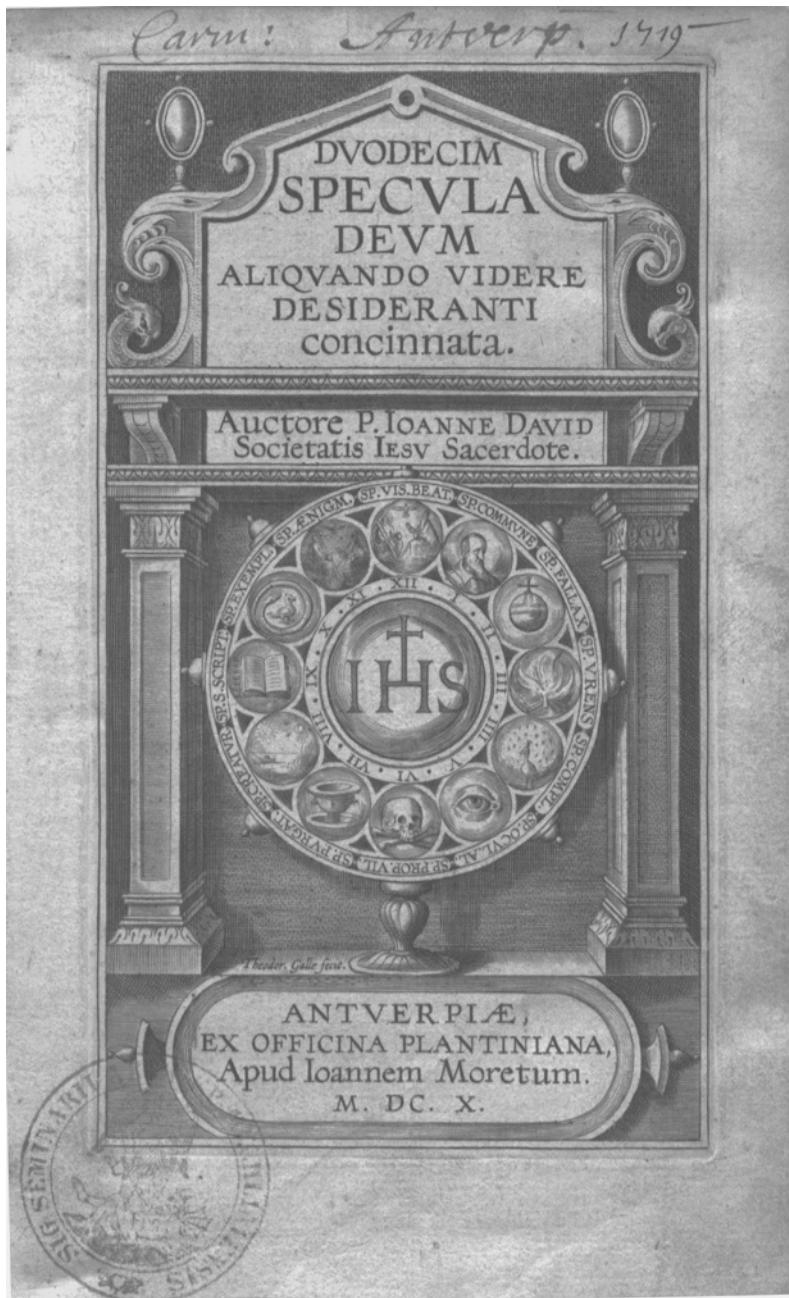


Fig. 4. Theodoor Galle, engraved title-page to Jan David's *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (Antwerp, Apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610), octavo. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Maurits Sabbebibliotheek.

books composed by David between 1601 and 1610, the majority with engraved illustrations by Theodoor Galle (cf. *Veridicus Christianus* of 1601, *Typus occasionis* of 1603, *Occasio arrepta, neglecta* of 1605, *Paradisus sponsi et sponsae [...] et Pancarpium Marianum* of 1607).³⁶ The *Duodecim specula* consists of twelve chapters, each prefaced by an *imago*, focusing on various kinds and degrees of specular image: it starts with the Everyday Mirror (*speculum commune*), manufactured by ‘human artifice’ (‘artis opus’), the surface of which philosophers use to expose human characteristics, and ends with the Mirror of Beatific Vision (*speculum visionis beatifica*), in whose images the ‘cutting edge of the mind’ (‘acies mentis’) glimpses the radiance of divinity (‘divinum iubar’) [Figs. 5 and 9].³⁷ The mirrors are discussed by two interlocutors, Desirous of God (Desiderius), who plays the role of instructor, and the Soul (Anima), who learns how properly to utilize the various mirrors. The Mirror of Holy Writ (*speculum sacrae scripturae*) inhabits the ninth rung of the virtual ladder that conducts Anima, the viewer’s alter ego, step by step from the contemplation of nature toward the contemplation of God [Fig. 7].³⁸ It follows the Mirror of Creation (*speculum creaturarum*), in which all things in nature are seen as images of their Creator, and precedes the Mirror of Example (*speculum exemplare*), in which virtuous exemplars, first among whom Jesus and Mary, serve as images to be imitated [Figs. 6 and 8].³⁹ That Jesus and Mary appear in *imago X* as portraits on a diptych’s pendant panels indicates how David conceives of mirror images as pictorial in

³⁶ On David’s four previous emblem books, some of which were issued in multiple editions, see Daly – Dimler, *Jesuit Series I* 147–162. Differences between the Dutch and Latin editions of the *Veridicus Christianus* give some sense of the varied audiences David sought to address; see Waterschoot W., “*Veridicus Christianus* and *Christelicken Waerseggher* by Johannes David”, in Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni-Bruslé (eds.), *Emblemata sacra: rhétorique et herméneutique du discours sacré dans la littérature en images* (Turnhout: 2004) 527–534. The quarto edition of the *Duodecim specula* published by Theodoor Galle, may have been a deluxe printing on large sheets, featuring exceptionally fine impressions of the plates; on this edition, probably issued at the same time as the octavo printed by Jan Moretus, see Sommervogel II, col. 1851, no. 20.

³⁷ David Jan, S.J., *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (Antwerp, Apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610), octavo, ill. I: ‘Naturam iuvat artis opus; speculoque magistro,/ Praecipit arcanas emaculare notas’. Ibidem, ill. XII: ‘Purga aciem mentis: Divinum lumine recto,/ Sedibus aethereis, ut speculere iubar’.

³⁸ Ibidem, ill. IX: ‘Quid fugias, quid ames, sacra cum tibi pagina monstrat;/ De caelo lapsi quam Speculi instar habet’.

³⁹ Ibidem, ill. VIII: ‘Quot rerum species; Speculis tot, Conditor unus/ Cernitur: utendo gratius ut esse velis’. Ibidem, ill. X: ‘Lucet, et inflamat, Speculum exemplaris honesti;/ Virtutem alterius si cupis esse tuam’.



Fig. 5. Theodoor Galle, *Speculum commune*, engraved illustration from Jan David's *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (Antwerp, Apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610), chapter 1. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Maurits Sabbebibliotheek.



Fig. 6. Theodoor Galle, *Speculum creaturarum*, engraved illustration from Jan David's *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (Antwerp, Apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610), chapter 8. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Maurits Sabbebilioothek.

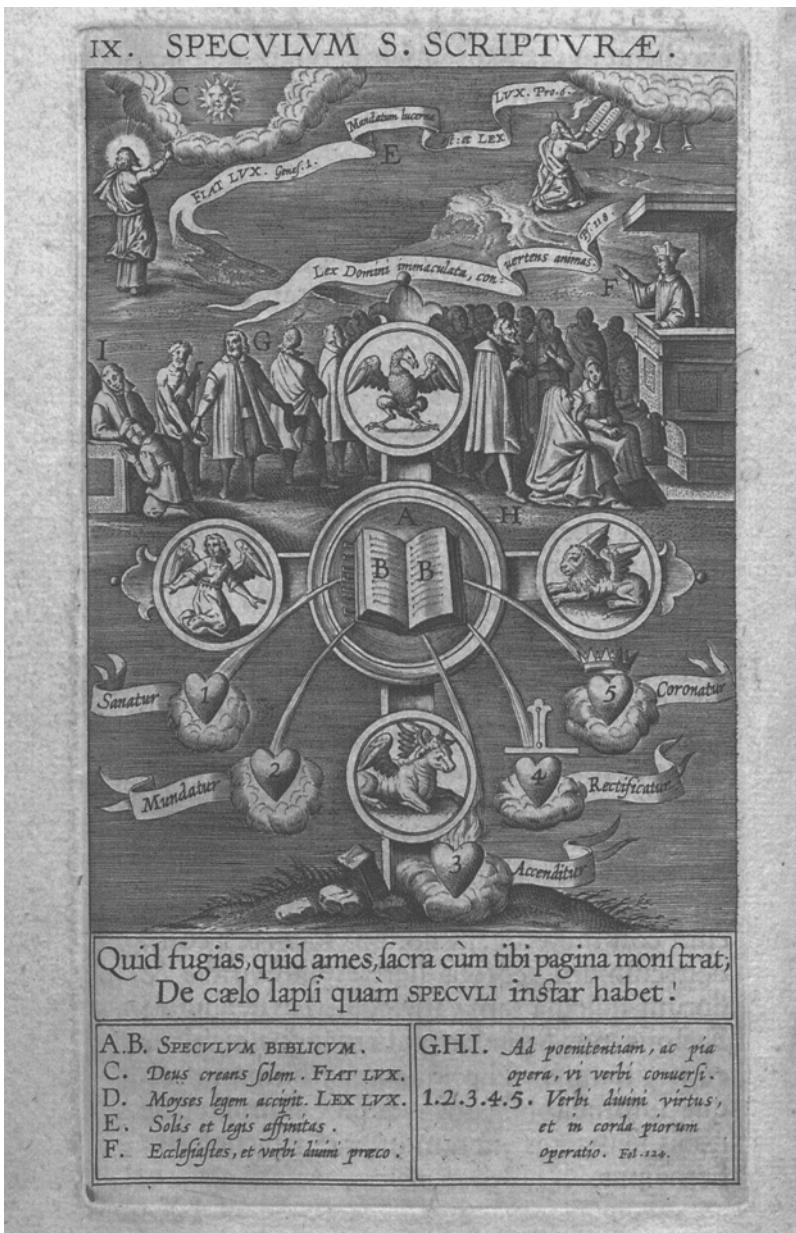


Fig. 7. Theodoor Galle, *Speculum Sacrae Scripturae*, engraved illustration from Jan David's *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (Antwerp, Apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610), chapter 9. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Maurits Sabbebilioothek.



Fig. 8. Theodoor Galle, *Speculum exemplare*, engraved illustration from Jan David's *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (Antwerp, Apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610), chapter 10. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Maurits Sabbebilioothek.

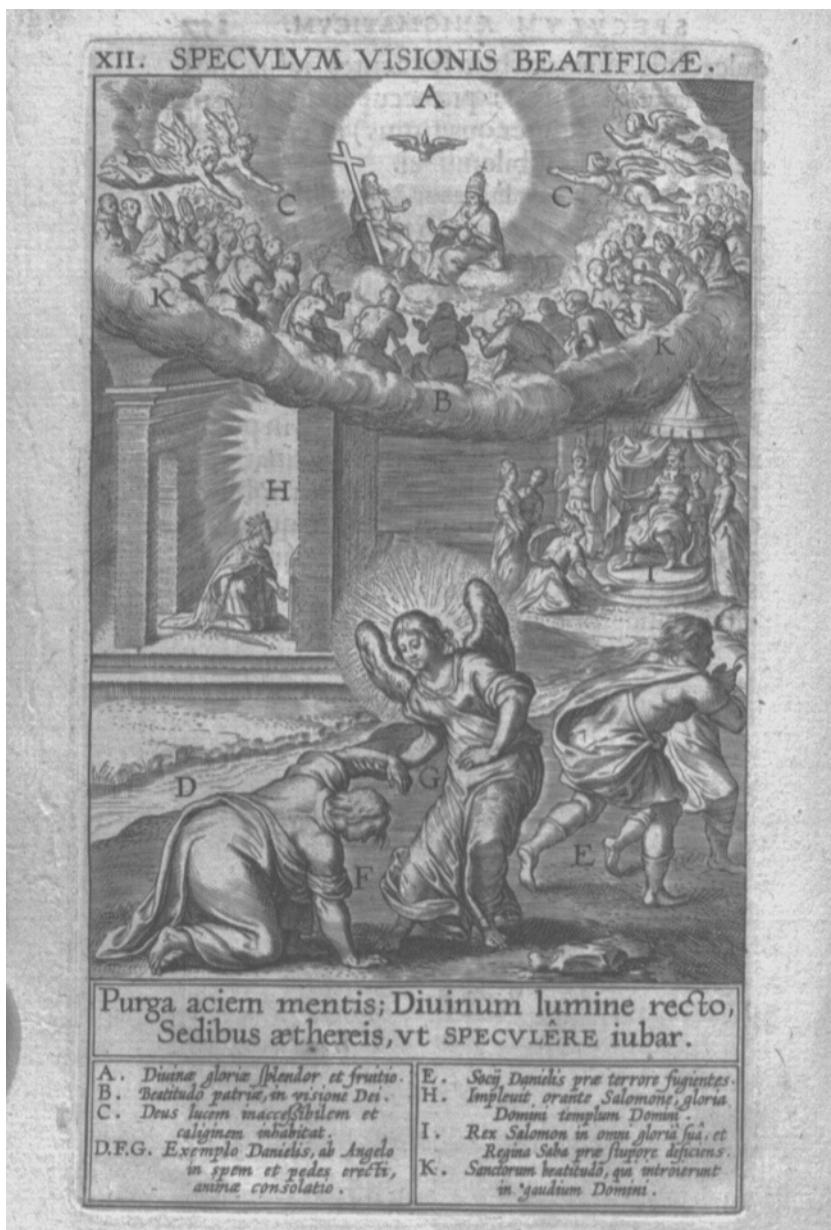


Fig. 9. Theodoor Galle, *Speculum visionis beatificaæ*, engraved illustration from Jan David's *Duodecim specula Deum aliquando videre desideranti concinnata* (Antwerp, Apud Ioannem Moretum: 1610), chapter 12. Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Maurits Sabbebilioothek.

form and function: whether scrutinizing the things of nature or noteworthy human models, one must render them to the mind's eye as if they were being seen in a mirror, whose surface brings forth images that have the clarity and vividness of paintings [Fig. 8].

Imago IX, illustrating the Mirror of Creation, adumbrates the Mirror of Holy Writ, in that it incorporates several biblical images: in scene F, Job climbs the ladder of creation, attending closely to the things God has created, that give an earnest of His omnipotence (*Job* 38–41); in scene G, the proverbial good wife surveys and buys a field, construing it as a token of divine munificence (*Proverbs* 31:16); in scene H, a gentleman follows Jesus's injunction to behold the lilies of the field and birds of air, dwelling on the kingdom of God, rather than on mundane matters (*Matthew* 6:26–30) [Fig. 7]. Like Job, the good wife, and the latter-day follower of Christ, we too must convert *creatura* – either seen directly, by the eyes of the body, or indirectly, by the eyes of the mind – into meditative images that prompt us to consider the nature of God. In this instance, scenes F, G, and H convey to the eyes what the biblical text conveys to the imagination (through dialogue in the book of Job, through apothegm in Proverbs, through parable in Matthew). As David states at the start of chapter 9, the formation of such mirror images is a sort of meditative artifice: 'Anima: I feel myself wonderfully renewed and strengthened by the sight and use of that [mirror] [...] and in celestial matters fit to be meditated, very much assisted by such an art' ('ad caelestia tali arte meditanda').⁴⁰ For a precedent, he cites the example of Thomas Aquinas: having admired the beauty of Louis IX's queen, Margaret of Provence, at a royal banquet, he then brought *Apocalypse* 12:1 to mind, visualizing the woman in the sun and imagining how much more beautiful the Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven, must be ('in animum venit, secum expendere, quam pulchra debuerit esse').⁴¹ Both the eyes of the body and the eyes of the mind are legitimate sources of the specular images that represent to the beholder aspects of the Creator's 'goodness' ('Dei bonitatem'), 'wisdom' ('eius sapientiam'), and 'power' ('eius potentiam').⁴² David recalls the litanies praising God and His creation in *Exodus* 15:1–19, *Psalm* 105, and *Daniel* 3 (the second song of Shadrach, Meshach,

⁴⁰ David, *Duodecim specula* 111: 'Mirifice me illius adspectu atque usu sentio recreatam et corroboratam [...] atque ad caelestia tali arte meditanda multum adiutam'.

⁴¹ Ibidem.

⁴² Ibidem 112.

and Abednego in the burning fiery furnace), and in consequence has Desiderius admonish Anima: ‘But let us bless the Lord, oh Soul, and even while we ‘are exiled from the real vision of God’ Himself (‘a reali visione peregrinamur’), let us never remove from the eyes of our body or mind that mirror of His wonders, wherein He illuminates us through his creations. [...] Yes indeed, let us with a certain singular affection of the heart run through the orders of all creation, following said three boys (*Daniel* 3), and let us endeavour diligently all the more to praise and glorify God the Creator of everything, and through the help and example of that creation, by considering the same, let us make greater headway toward our salvation’.⁴³

In the estimation of Desiderius, the Mirror of Holy Writ surpasses its predecessor, partly because the image of everything contained in the Mirror of Creation may already be found in the Bible, where moreover everything in nature is clearly ascribed to God. Like King Ezechias who showed the Babylonian envoys his every treasure (2 *Kings* 20:12–15, *Isaiah* 39:1–4), Scripture exhibits to us the treasury of divine creation, in which the handiwork of God may be examined and appreciated (‘nobis in hoc bipatenti Scripturae Speculo longe praestantiora, pretiosiora, plura, maiora, rariora, speculanda exhiberi, quam Rex Ezechias Babylonii ostendit’).⁴⁴ Just as the previous mirror mobilized whatsoever in nature was apparent to the senses, so the present mirror encourages us to bring to bear our speculative faculty, discerning everywhere in Scripture its divine source:

And just as at the prompting of the prior mirror, we wandered through the sky and stars, fields and meadows, and whatever they bear and contain, seeking, finding, and observing the maker of all things in His works (artificem omnium in opere suo), so here, having lighted upon a more sublime and noble mirror, through its guidance we shall increasingly be rendered partners in the excellence of divine speculation.⁴⁵

⁴³ Ibidem 113: ‘Nos autem, o anima, benedicamus Domino; et speculum illud mirabilium Dei, per quod ipse nobis in suis creatis transparet, quamdiu quidem a reali ipsius visione peregrinamur, numquam ab oculis mentis nostrae corporeis amoveamus. [...] Quinimo, singulari quodam mentis affectu, ad trium iam dictorum imitationem, per omnium creaturarum ordines discurremus; maioremque semper Domini factorisque omnium laudem ac gloriam, maioremque salutis nostrae profectum, tum ipsarum auxilio atque exemplo, tum alia earumdem consideratione, elicere studeamus’.

⁴⁴ Ibidem 119.

⁴⁵ Ibidem 114–115: ‘Ac, quemadmodum praecedentis instinctu, per caelum et sidera, per campos et prata, iisque contenta et connata, vagati sumus; artificem omnium

By this, Desiderius means that Anima shall come to see God with greater clarity ('ipsi omnium factori vicinius appropinquantes') and to hear Him speaking as if face to face ('os ad os audiemus loquentem'), as cognitive complements to the images the Mirror of Creation has previously made visible ('praeter omnia alia, quae praecedentis specula ministerio ob oculos constituta fuere').⁴⁶

David attributes the conceit of the Mirror of Holy Writ to Gregory the Great, who describes Scripture 'as a mirror set before the eyes of the mind' in the *Moralia in Job* ('mentis oculis quasi quoddam speculum opponitur'), and to Augustine, who entitled his moral handbook compiled from biblical sources *De Scriptura Sacra speculum*.⁴⁷ He also mentions the apostle James, who rebukes mere hearers of the word, comparing them to 'a man who beholds his face in a mirror' and then promptly forgets what he has seen ('viro consideranti vultum nativitatis suae in speculo'); instead, one must be a doer of the word, on the model of an attentive and retentive beholder ('estote autem factores verbi et non auditores tantum fallentes vosmet ipsos').⁴⁸ This comparison, as David notes, rests on the implied analogy between the *verbum Dei* and a *speculum*. But David carries this analogy much farther than James, Augustine, or Gregory: the scriptural images he purports to discern are often characterized as if they were pictorial images, and the exegetical themes he develops are more often than not centred on visual images. Take, for example, his linking of *Genesis* 1:3, 'Let there be light', and *Proverbs* 6:23, 'The commandment is a lamp, and the Law a light', that proceeds by way of the parallel images of the newly created sun as a source of light and the fiery light from out of which God conferred the Law on Mount Sinai. Since the tablets of the Law were the first scriptures, these passages demonstrate that Scripture is like the sun: as the sun, the 'sublime mirror and eye of the world', makes all created things visible, so too does Scripture cast its light, making visible what God has wrought. That this is indeed the case may be seen from the fact that Divine Wisdom, the voice of Scripture, is itself using images to speak of Scripture as if it were another sun:

in opere suo requirentes, invenientes, contemplantes: ita modo longe sublimius nobis
liusque nacti speculum, per eius ductum, eximiae magis magisque divinae speculatio-
nis consortes reddemur'.

⁴⁶ Ibidem 115.

⁴⁷ Ibidem 115–116.

⁴⁸ Ibidem 121–122.

Desiderius: By that command “Fiat lux”, God fashioned the sun, that sublime mirror and eye of the world, and so too he established the fiery, lucid, and intensely flashing mirror of sacred Scripture on Mount Sinai, just as if it were the sun rising: thus might Divine Wisdom speak of the Law as of another sun, saying, “The commandment is a lamp, and the Law a light”.⁴⁹

By means of such images, infers Desiderius, quoting *Psalm* 118:130, ‘The unfolding of Thy words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple’, the word of God accommodates to human intelligence. Implicit in this citation is an allusion to *Romans* 6:19, as a marginal gloss suggests: ‘I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations’.⁵⁰ He amplifies these remarks by quoting further passages from *Psalm* 118, that resort to affective images of the Law: gold and silver represent its goodness, the topaz and other gems its preciousness, the honeycomb its sweetness, in the eyes, heart, and mind of the Psalmist.⁵¹ Once again, it is God Himself, speaking through the prophet David, who marshals images to expound the relation between His words and His people. For Jan David, then, images function as the currency of human frailty: they illuminate the words of God, making them apprehensible.

The upper half of *imago IX* illustrates this conceit in scenes C–F. C depicts God creating the sun, D Moses receiving the tablets of the Law, and the letter E, placed midway between these two scenes, stands for the principle of visual analogy that connects them (‘E: Solis et legis affinitas’) [Fig. 7]. Above the letter, the phrase ‘Mandatum lucerna’, supplies the *tertium comparationis* that correlates the *lux* of *Genesis* 1 and the *lux* of *Proverbs* 6. A further visual analogy attaches scenes C and E to scene F, which portrays a priest preaching to an attentive congregation. Like God the Creator and Moses the lawgiver, he raises his right arm in a gesture having to do with transmission of the word. The banderole affixed to the pulpit displays the text the preacher is explicating: ‘The Law of the Lord is unspotted, converting souls’ (*Psalm* 18:8). Scenes G–I provide examples of the word’s effects, as

⁴⁹ Ibidem 120: ‘tunc excelsum istud atque sublime speculum, ipsumque adeo oculum mundi solem videlicet tali Deus mandato formavit: Fiat Lux. Et quando vicissim in monte Sinai Moysi legem dedit, ignitum, lucidum, et plane coruscans hoc Sacrae Scripturae Speculum, quasi in suo ortu fundavit, ut, tamquam de altero sole, de hoc ipso locutus sit Sapiens, dicens: Mandatum lucerna est, et Lex Lux’.

⁵⁰ Ibidem 121.

⁵¹ Ibidem.

the shared caption makes clear: ‘The power of the word converts to penitence and good works’. The almsgiver demonstrates the practice of good works, while the man wringing his hands exemplifies the stirring of conscience (H), that instigates the confession of sins (I).

Within the context of chapter 9, scenes G–I also double as exempla of the effects produced by the biblical images mirrored in the *Speculum Sacrae Scripturae*. The preacher brings these images to the mind, as in *imago IX*, but they are accessible as well to any good reader of Scripture, who strives to evaluate himself in light of the life of Christ and of the commandments and prophecies that preface and prefigure Him. Scripture is equivalent to Christ, all of whom may thus be discerned by the attentive viewer of the Mirror of Holy Writ: ‘Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ. And since you, Lord, represent in the scriptures all of yourself, your will, your innermost thoughts, as if in a mirror, what shall it profit him to have observed all other things clearly, who yet fails to know you?’⁵² The author of the Bible (‘auctorum illius libri’) is the selfsame maker of that scriptural mirror (‘istiusmodi speculi artificem’), in which David urges us to behold ourselves and measure our likeness to Christ:

As [Augustine] says, he who now trusting in God wishes to obey Him, should inspect himself here [in this mirror], noting his progress in good works and morals, and likewise what is wanting in himself. [...] As [Bernard] says [in the *Speculum monachorum*], if such an explorer (explorator), solicitous of his thoughts, words, and deeds, strives to correct his universal faults, having been moved to desire a better life, let him contemplate his interior visage (interioris hominis sui faciem), as if in a mirror, through frequent reading of the present book and assiduous meditation.⁵³

David further exhorts the reader-viewer ‘to contemplate the present mirror with his eyes and heart’ (‘studiis et obtutibus speculum praesens [...] contemplemur’), in order that the testimonies it mus-

⁵² Ibidem 127: ‘Ignorantia Scripturarum, ignorantia Christi est. Cumque tu Domine in illis voluntatem tuam et intima cogitationum tuarum arcana totumque te ipsum nobis, ut in speculo, demonstraris, quid proderit illi, qui cetera cuncta perspecta habuerit, te autem solum ignorari?’

⁵³ Ibidem 117: ‘Ut, inquit, qui iam credens, Deo obedire voluerit, hic se inspiciat, quantum in bonis moribus operibusque profecerit; et quantum sibi desit, attendat. [...] Si quis, inquit, emendationis vitae desiderio tactus, cogitationum, locutionum operumque suorum sollicitus explorator, universos excessus suos corrigere nititur, in praesentis paginae frequenti lectione et assidua meditatione (tamquam in Speculo) interioris hominis sui faciem contempletur’.

ters may become fully apparent ('mirabilia testimonia tua Domine [...] scrutata est ea anima mea') and the face of God be unveiled ('faciem suam illuminabit super servos suos').⁵⁴ Such contemplation entails close scrutiny of the specular image, on the model of a mirror whose reflective surface the attentive viewer strives to penetrate, looking deep into the images it puts forward. This is not to say that David recommends that we look past images to the truths they conceal: on the contrary, he encourages us intently to scrutinize these images, to delve in and through them, looking for the truths they make discernible: 'And indeed the use of an artificial mirror has this in common with the use of the mirror of divine law – that it ought to be inspected 'as if it were being seen into' ('ac si perspiceretur'), [or] as if you were gazing at your mirror-image with a view to penetrating yourself, and not merely touching upon this or that superficial feature with your eyes. Nor must that mirror ever be withdrawn from the eyes of the mind, but rather we must persist in contemplating it'.⁵⁵ More than a passing analogy, the likeness of the *speculum sacrae scripturae* to an actual mirror is sustained throughout chapter 9 ('ad artificialia specula, similitudinem hanc').⁵⁶ Speaking exegetically, David compares the density and obscurity of the images cast by the Old Testament, to the lesser resolution of the images reflected in a mirror made of lead ('instar plumbei speculi'); the merit and clarity of the images cast by the New Testament, to the greater resolution of the images reflected in a mirror made of silver ('instar argentei speculi'). Together the two testaments resemble a mirror made up of two panels, the one lead, the other silver, inseparably conjoined like the two tablets of the Law ('quasi unum binarum tabularum efficiant speculum').⁵⁷ Like the pure surface of 'an unspotted, unclouded mirror' ('purum in primis et immaculatum speculum'), the image of the Law is immaculate (*Psalm* 18:8); like images in a 'clear and limpid mirror' ('limpidum lucidumque [...] speculum'), the precepts of the Lord shine forth (*Psalm* 18:9).⁵⁸ Like the reflective surface

⁵⁴ Ibidem 123–124.

⁵⁵ Ibidem 123: 'Et quidem artificialis speculi usus, cum usu specula legis divinae, commune hoc habet, quod sic inspici debet ac si perspiceretur; quasi penetrando, te ipsum ex adverso conspicias, non autem tantummodo huius vel illius superficiem oculis radas. Neque istud ab oculis mentis umquam est amovendum; sed nobis est in eius contemplatione permanendum'.

⁵⁶ Ibidem 115.

⁵⁷ Ibidem 116.

⁵⁸ Ibidem 118.

of a quiet sea, that keeps its level howsoever variable its depths ('dorsi eius aequalitas, unde et aequoris nomen'), so the testimonies of God remain equitable forever (*Psalm 118:144, 172*).⁵⁹

Imago IX ingeniously illustrates the process of penetrative viewing that David advocates. Overlapping the congregants, whose conscience the preacher has stirred, the summit of the cross signifies that the Passion of Christ, conveyed by the evangelists (*vide* the eagle, lion, ox, and angel), offers an antidote to sin and a castigation of the sinner. Letter A designates the surface of the mirror that reflects the image of a Bible, its two testaments marked B and B. This literally biblical image undoubtedly alludes both to the Bible as a source of scriptural images and to the reader's task of generating images from his perusal of Scripture. The opening scene from Genesis at upper left (C) and the seven seals projecting from the open book (B) signify that the mirror to be consulted encompasses the full scope of Scripture. Hanging from the cross, as if crucified at the junction of its two arms, the mirror seems to substitute for Christ, and thereby alludes to its capacity of making Him visually present. Five streams of blood pour from the image of the Bible into five hearts perched on clouds that stand for the spiritual elevation of the beholder. The numbered hearts trace the five stages of the penitent's passage from scriptural viewing to self-transformation in the image of Christ. Biblical images restore the heart, causing it first to recall and then to keep the commandments ('non obliviscatur Legis Domini et mandata eius custodiat'); they cleanse the heart of the iniquities it harbours ('quia mundari quoque debet [...] ab omnibus inquinamentis'); they 'inflame the heart', renewing 'its love of God' ('etiam amoris tui igne inflammetur'); they justify the heart, assuring it of salvation ('spiritum rectum innova in visceribus meis'); and they elevate the heart to God, detaching it from the depravity of the world ('superatisque omnibus huius mundi pravitatibus caelestis gloriae corona donetur').⁶⁰ The reader-viewer is advised to secure these effects by beseeching Christ the Word, the image of the substance of God, to license further scriptural images that have the power to transform: 'I beseech you, Lord Jesus, who are the eternal wisdom of the Father, the Word, truth, splendor, and image of His substance: grant us the light

⁵⁹ Ibidem.

⁶⁰ Ibidem 124–125.

of Your grace, whereby assiduously and with relish, we may behold the Mirror of Holy Writ, for the purpose of meditating it'.⁶¹

The three prints we have been examining – Lieven de Witte's portrayal of 2 *Corinthians* 3:6, Cornelis Cort's engraving after Federico Zuccaro's paean to the Annunciation, and Theodoor Galle's emblematic Mirror of Holy Writ – propound three templates for thinking about the authority of Scripture rendered verbally and visually. De Witte's title-page perfectly illustrates Willem van Branteghem's conception of the Gospels and Epistles as harbingers of a new dispensation, under which the formerly unseen God becomes visible to loving eyes and hearts in Christ. The icon of the Holy Face is seen to usher in the era of the sacred image. Cort's print after Zuccaro orchestrates complementary arguments about the history of human salvation, leading from the sin of Adam and Eve to the mystery of the Incarnation. On the one hand, the case is made visually by recourse to the thematics of spiritual vision. On the other, it is made by means of a densely worked fabric of textual and visual exegeses, that derive from the *Glossa* but also inflect its readings of key prophecies concerning the Virgin and the advent of Christ. Galle's emblem of scriptural mirroring puts forward a reflexive meditative apparatus that construes the Bible as a source of sacred images that enable the votary to visualize himself.

The *Iesu Christi vita* and *Duodecim specula* are meditative programs promulgated in book form, the former as a Gospel harmony, the latter as an emblematic treatise on the soul's ascent to God. The *Annunciation Broadcast by Prophets of the Incarnation* is an independent print, published at very large scale, to convert a liturgical fresco into an object of meditative devotion and exegetical reflection. Self-evidently, there were other kinds of program, other kinds of text, other kinds of image, other ways of reflecting on the relation between image and text, other ways of construing the authorizing potential of a text-image apparatus. The essays in this volume grant access to many kinds of textual and visual discourse, allowing us better to discern how words and images interacted to represent and by representing to constitute authority, both sacred and secular, between 1400 and 1700.

⁶¹ Ibidem 125: 'Obsecro, Domine Iesu, qui aeterna es Patris sapientia, Verbum, veritas, splendor, et figura substantiae eius: da nobis gratiae tuae lumen, quo illustrati, Speculum hoc Sacrae Scripturae assidue cum gusto meditando contemplemur'.

Geert Warnar opens the section “Verbum visibile: The Authority of the Visible Word”. He considers the shift from the spoken to the written word as the chief courtly instrument through which clerical and other kinds of learning were transmitted to the laity. This transition is exemplified reflexively in Dirc van Delft’s *Tafel van den kersten gelove* (ca. 1400), especially the chapter retailing the story of Secundus, the silent philosopher who instructed the emperor Hadrian by recourse to writing. The *Tafel* encompasses various kinds and genres of written knowledge – classical and biblical exempla, theological doctrine, princely instruction – that authorize the friar Dirc as a latter-day Secundus, implicitly confirming him in his role as teacher to Albert of Bavaria.

Peter van der Coelen inquires into the technical and interpretative relationship between text and image within reproductive prints issued in the Low Countries between 1550 and 1650. Such prints begin regularly to include inscriptions in Latin and/or the vernacular at mid-century, and as Van der Coelen observes from the example of Pieter Bruegel, even when the designer of the print was cognizant that a text would be attached to his image, it was the engraver and the publisher, not the draughtsman, to whom such a text would be given. This implies, as other examples clearly reveal, that the reader-viewer was expected to insert himself interpretatively between the picture and the inscription, discerning how word and image challenge, complement, or even substitute for one another.

Anita Traninger unscrambles the witty encoding of visual signs and hermetic meanings staged by François Rabelais in the well-known disputation scene from the *Pantagruel*. Learned yet carnivalesque, elevated yet scatological, this episode involves two antagonists, the eponymous Pantagruel and the English cleric Thaumaste, who enact their debate silently and graphically for the benefit of a learned audience. Through a system of explicit allusion to the *symbola Pythagora* (the thirty-nine maxims of Pythagoras), the responses they call forth both exemplify and subvert the two-fold hermeneutics of the *sensus litteralis* and *sensus spiritualis* codified by Augustine. Thaumaste and Pantagruel’s bizarre antics visually convert both senses into a carnal bodying forth of hidden meanings, that calls into question the authoritative mechanisms of the *plus hault sens*.

Catherine Levesque brings the section to a close with a look at the Word made visible both in the depiction and viewing of the densely

foliated forests of the Flemish painter, Gillis van Coninxloo. She analyses Coninxloo's pictures of the forest wilderness not only as epitomes of painting's capacity to imitate nature's artistry and natural processes, but also as visions of nature inflected by a Calvinist understanding of divine Providence made manifest in the order and workings of nature. She argues that this Calvinist visual hermeneutic, conjoined with compatible ideas of nature put forth in classical poetics and neo-Stoic philosophy provided key lenses through which Coninxloo and his contemporaries looked at and understood the complex interplay of art and nature in his work.

Karl Enenkel launches the section "The Authority of Visual Paratexts". He attempts to understand humanist author's portraits not in terms of physical likeness or authentic individual expression (as was frequently done), but on a functional level. By regarding author's portraits in the first place as *paratexts* – elements added to a certain text that are closely connected with the 'main' text, he queries what the paratext of an author's portrait tells us about the intended usage of the text to which it is attached. For his case study, he takes a series of author's portraits of Francis Petrarch, a true icon of 'Renaissance individualism' and one of the most frequently depicted persons of early modern culture. Through close analysis and comparison, Enenkel demonstrates in what way Petrarch's author's portraits function successfully as paratexts, using a subtle and sometimes very traditional symbolic pictorial language. More precisely, he explains the different devices and methods by which author's portraits add *authority* to texts, function as mediators of its contents, and 'guide' the reader through a certain text – suggesting from the very start how it may properly be read and understood.

Wim François investigates the relation among text, paratext, and image in the authorized Dutch "Louvain Bible" of 1548, translated by Nicolaus van Winghe and published by Bartholomeus van Grave, with the approbation of the theological faculty of Louvain. Its illustrations, as he indicates, derive from a tradition of Vulgate editions extending from the Venetian Bible of Lucantonio di Giunta to the Antwerp editions of Willem Vorsterman and Martin Lempereur, but with this crucial difference: Van Grave's images cleave rigorously to the literal and historical sense of Scripture; they eschew any internal reference to allegory and correlate to no external paratextual reference to typology. In particular, the woodcut of *Solomon Writing and Resting*, diverges

from pictorial precedent in describing him not as the author of the Books of Wisdom, but exclusively as he is portrayed in the imagery of *Canticle 3:7–11*.

Bart Ramakers initiates the section “Reading Scripture through Images”. He examines the evidence of biblical reading found in two *zinnespelen* (allegorical plays) performed respectively by the Kaprijke and the Antwerp chambers of rhetoric at the famous theatrical competition of 1539, held in Ghent. In response to the competition question, ‘What offers the greatest comfort to a man dying?’, these chambers marshaled a wide range of scriptural proof texts, the meanings of which were set forth verbally by means of discursive argumentation and visually by means of affective personification. These verbal and visual exegeses give evidence of an ‘experiential religious culture’ that centers on Christ, on biblical notions of faith and grace, and on a conception of the universal Church, as yet undivided into confessional camps.

Michel Weemans expounds the exegetical argument of Herri met de Bles’s *Paradise tondo* (ca. 1550), drawing an analogy between the picture’s *netticheyt* (meticulousness of execution) and Origen’s conception of biblical hermeneutics, which consists in ‘scrupulous reading’ of the Word. The small episodes from Genesis embedded in the landscape operate enigmatically, for their narrative clarity in fact cloaks allusions to the mysteries of salvation, but also synthetically, for they form part of an integrated fabric of interpretation that encompasses all of Creation. The tondo, as Weemans shows, consists of visual elements, such as the dual presence of God the Father and Christ, that function, once discerned, as exegetical prompts to a typological and eschatological reading of *Genesis 1–3*.

Andrew Morrall concludes this section with a discussion of the ways that Scripture became quite literally woven into the fabric of domestic life via depictions of Adam and Eve in seventeenth-century English embroideries. These works, many of which were produced as part of the domestic and spiritual education of female members of households, offer a distinctive purchase on the visual interpretation of Scripture in a Protestant culture that made embroidery and religious devotion interrelated parts of a daily routine. Morrall considers their floral decoration to explore how quasi-religious, affective attitudes toward flowers drew together diverse aspects of English culture, from poetry and moral theology, to the visual arts and horticulture. Through layered analyses of a range of embroidered objects the essay traces how, both

in the treatment of the Garden of Eden and the techniques and materials through which the biblical subject was depicted, these embroideries reveal changing conceptions of nature and domesticity, political and religious ideologies of marriage, and suggest a complex interplay of aesthetic, spiritual, and poetic concerns that formed part of the *habitus* of the pious English household.

John Decker opens the section “Verbal and Visual Instruments of Devotional Authority”. He explores the field of practical devotion – the employment of images, objects, and practices dedicated to keeping body and soul safe. Decker focuses especially on apotropaic devices that were widely used in the Middle Ages and in the early modern period: the ‘ocular consumption’ of the Host (*Augenkommunion*), woodcuts or engravings with saint’s images, especially of Mary, little slips of paper with prayers and bible texts, used as ‘*slikprentjes*’, rosaries, ‘Pater nosters’, and so on. Decker demonstrates that votaries thereby hoped to secure tangible positive effects: a little woodcut of Saint Sebastian, for example, was believed to protect its user and his family from the black death. Such practices often complemented more discursive meditative exercises, and were neither in contradiction with the official doctrine of the Catholic Church nor forbidden by it.

Achim Timmermann’s essay on wayside crosses moves the discussion of devotional instruments into the visual and spatial environment of the countryside, with a consideration of the monuments that structured powerful connections between the physical landscape and the imaginative terrain of spiritual allegory. In his account these ubiquitous monuments, which served multiple mnemonic and social functions, function as nodal points in a web of connections that Timmermann maps out from the monuments themselves to two sorts texts and images: on the one hand, the homiletic allegories in which roadside monuments act as guideposts for the Christian’s redemptive journey and on the other, the pictorial imagery of the landscape of the soul. He makes a case for understanding the roadside cross in its multiple manifestations as a portal that allowed medieval travelers to cross the boundaries of historical time and space, and thus to glimpse the divine plan of salvation, both in the living landscape and the virtual terrain of devotional and meditative practice.

Kate Rudy’s essay looks at the functions of rubrics in fifteenth-century Netherlandish prayer books, in which they serve as mediators of the authority and efficacy of prayers. Setting forth the visual and linguistic distinctions between rubrics and the prayers they accompany,

she describes how rubrics shaped acts of devotion by certifying the genealogies that authorized particular prayers and the indulgences attached to them. Rubrics also stipulated the protocols that votaries needed to follow, including the use of particular devotional images, for their prayers to be activated and efficacious. Through a close analysis of leaves from two Delft Books of Hours, she shows how rubrics framed prayers to the Holy Face and the Wounds of Christ (two of the most prolific and frequently indulged of Netherlandish devotional images), structuring viewer response and choreographing somatic relationships between votaries and Christ.

Carolyn Muessig addresses one of the most important means of spiritual authorization discussed and debated in the late Middle Ages (13th–16th centuries): the *stigmata*. After the stigmatization of Francis of Assisi, who miraculously received the five wounds of Christ on Mount La Verna, his fellow Franciscans, especially Bonaventura da Bagnoreggio, reflected on the evidence for and meaning of the *stigmata*, ultimately developing a true stigmatic theology. This theology was partly aimed at authorizing the new order and defining the Franciscan identity. Dominican theologians, such as Jacopo da Varazze (Jacobus de Voragine) and Giordano da Pisa, also participated fervently in shaping the discourse of ‘stigmatic’ holiness. In particular, Jacopo da Varazze identifies Francis’s *vehemens imaginatio*, his ardent love for and imagination of the crucified Christ, as the chief cause of the stigmata. As Muessig shows, the Dominicans developed a competing theology of spiritual (as opposed to corporeal) stigmatization, exemplified by Catherine of Siena (+ 1380), whose hagiography was compiled by Raymond of Capua and endorsed by the Sienese pope Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini).

Birgit Ulrike Münch reassesses the verbal and visual apparatus apparent in two monuments of Tridentine Catholicism – Jerome Nadal’s *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Antwerp, Martinus Nutius: 1595) and Peter Paul Rubens’s *Triumph of the Church* (ca. 1630) – that she discovers to have emulated heterodox and ostensibly Lutheran sources. Another example, Justus Lipsius’s *De Cruce libri tres* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1594), would seem to avoid controversy by analyzing and illustrating the philological and antiquarian evidence on crucifixion, even while pointedly refusing to illustrate the Crucifixion of Christ. Münch demonstrates that many of our assumptions about the complex relation between image and text in the art of the Catholic Low Countries need urgently to be tested and revised.

Jan de Jong explores the critical responses of the Dutch humanist Aernout van Buchel to the verbal and visual rhetoric of selected monuments he encountered in Rome. Having transcribed these sights into an album, he initially treats them as if they were antiquities, but he later reworked these data into a second expanded manuscript, in which he reads the texts and images against alternative sources, appraising them as Catholic propaganda. With specific reference to the papal tomb of Innocent VIII and the tomb of Roberto Hosius (illegitimate son of Cardinal Altemps), De Jong explains how Van Buchel mustered biblical, early Christian, and contemporary historical authorities that allowed him to argue against the claims made textually and sculpturally by the monuments he had consulted *in situ*.

Maarten Delbeke tries to pin down the special kind of legitimisation that early modern local church histories, descriptions of miracles, and related treatises conferred on local cults in the Southern Netherlands. These texts endeavour to authorize the cults they describe, by certifying the dynamic relationship between the image and the altar, the image and the building. According to Delbeke, this process of authorisation, based in topology, was increasingly guided in the early modern period by the *printed* word: new buildings were thus reconnected to the sacred origins of local cults, the relics and traces of which they had been built to house. Delbeke offers the rich case study of Our Lady of Hanswijk in Mechelen. During the Dutch Revolt (1578), the miracle-working effigy of Our Lady was brought inside the city walls, and in 1663, the prior Willem Cool decided to erect a new building in its honour. Whereas Petrus Croon's *Historie van Onse Lieve Vrauwe van Hanswyck* (Mechelen, Gysbrecht Lints: 1670), establishes a topology for the new building, in which it is treated like a veritable prosthesis of the sacred effigy, the new miracle book of Our Lady of Hanswijk, written some sixty-five years later by Petrus Siré, reflects the new critical attitude that developed with regard to the status and function of such cult images. Here the building is described and analyzed formally, and the Marian effigy is no longer characterized as the building's spiritual agent, its soul. Rather, Siré meticulously elaborates on the decrees of the Council of Trent concerning the veneration of images, construing the cult of Hanswijk as the reenactment of scriptural precedent, best justified in terms of sacred history.

Walter Melion inaugurates the section "Pictorial Artifice and the Word". He considers how the trope of pictorial artifice serves as an instrument of Marian devotion, within the visual and verbal apparatus

exquisitely interwoven in Hieronymus Wierix's *Maria* series. These prints combine elements from three prayers of supplication – the *Salve Regina*, *Litania Loretana*, and *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* – with technical allusions to the rhetoric of artisanal perfection, explicitly associated to the Jesuit cult of the Virgin of Loreto by Orazio Torsellino in his treatise *Lauretanae historiae libri quinque* (Rome, Aloisius Zannetti: 1597). In addition, the prints' schemata of interlocking and overlapping images and texts evoke the virtual itinerary through a series of *compositiones loci*, visualized by Louis Richeome in his meditative treatise *Le pelerin de Lorete* (Bordeaux, S. Millange: 1604; reprint ed., Lyon, Pierre Rigaud: 1607).

James Clifton examines the seeming paradox of representing mystical states that eschew and even negate sensible representation, through an analysis of an unfinished series of engravings of a Carmelite mystic by Antoon III Wierix, datable to around 1620. Clifton challenges the claim that Wierix's series directly illustrates John of the Cross's *The Spiritual Canticle*. Instead, he sets his interpretation within a broader spectrum of Carmelite writings by Jerónimo Gracián, Juan de Jesús María, and Tomás de Jesús, among others, that endorse the use of verbal and visual figures, similes, and similitudes to describe – but not to prompt – the process of acquiring mystical wisdom.

Els Stronks asks how and why Dutch Calvinist meditation on the Passion of Christ takes a visual turn around 1650, as exemplified in the *Vescheyde Nederdutsche gedichten* (Amsterdam, Lodewijck Spillebout: 1651), a popular collection of devotional poems that aim to fashion affective verbal images of the Saviour, as if the poet's quill were dipped in His very blood. These poems situate the reader as witness to the Passion, in contravention of the earlier strictures promulgated by such ministers as Willem Teellinck, who insist that in devotion, vision and the other senses must be trained exclusively on the word of God, not on whatever is visible. Around 1680, as Stronks demonstrates, another radical transformation takes effect: the poet-etcher Jan Luyken, responding to the earlier work of Catholic emblemists such as Otto van Veen, Herman Hugo, and Benedictus van Haeften, begins to publish devotional emblem books that pictorially engage the votary, teaching him how he might learn to 'see God'.

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COLOUR PLATES

[PLATE I. LEVESQUE – Fig. 3, p. 138]



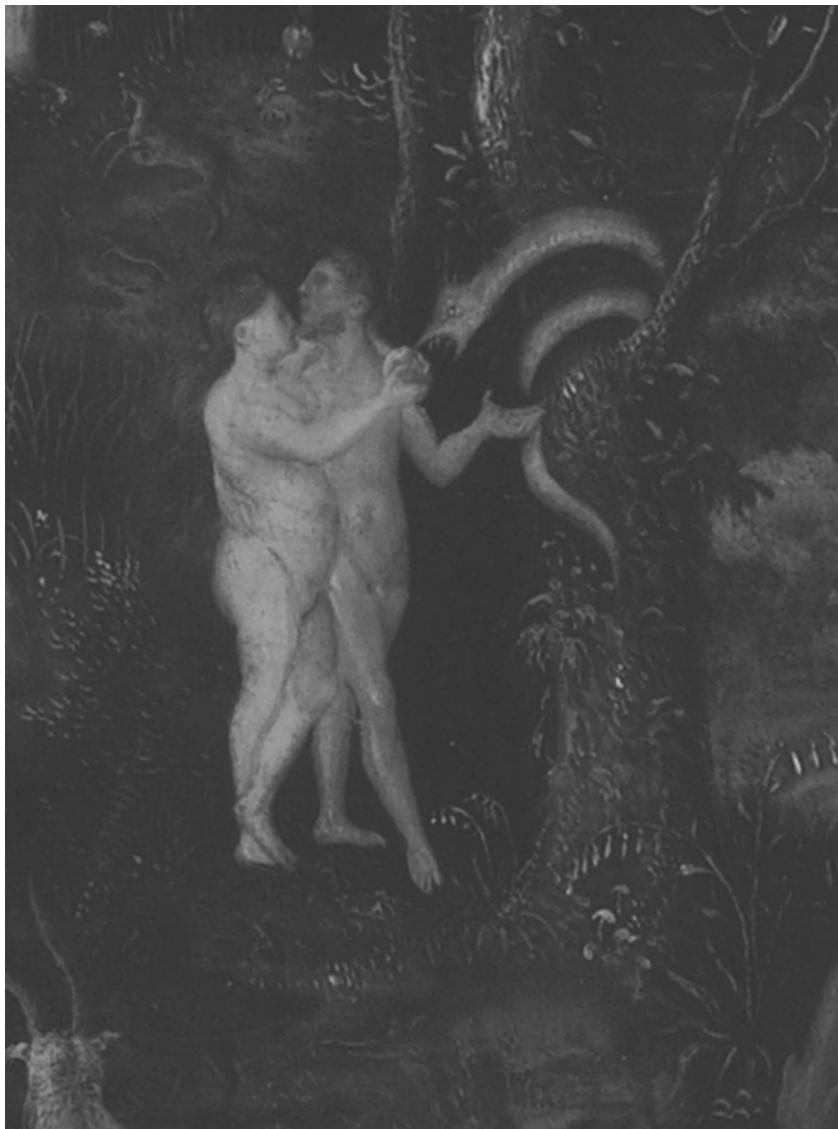
[PLATE II. ENENKEL – Fig. 5, p. 163]



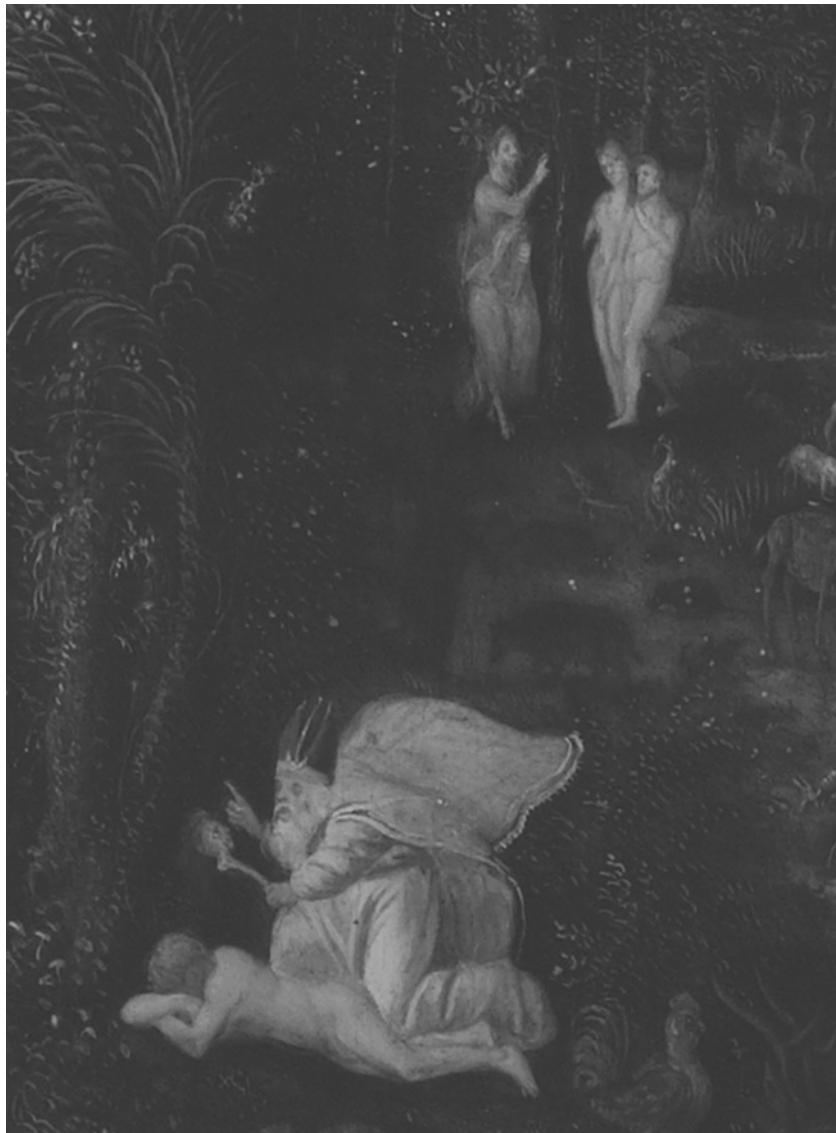
[PLATE III. WEEMANS – Fig. 1, p. 264]



[PLATE IIIA. WEEMANS – Fig. 6, p. 274]



[PLATE IIIB. WEEMANS – Fig. 14, p. 288]



[PLATE IV. MORRALL – Fig. 2, p. 320]



[PLATE V. MORRALL – Fig. 6, p. 328]



[PLATE VI. MORRALL – Fig. 7, p. 332]



[PLATE VII. MORRALL – Fig. 8, p. 335]



[PLATE VIII. TIMMERMANN – Fig. 2, p. 392]



[PLATE IX. TIMMERMANN – Fig. 5, p. 396]



[PLATE X. TIMMERMANN – Fig. 7, p. 399]



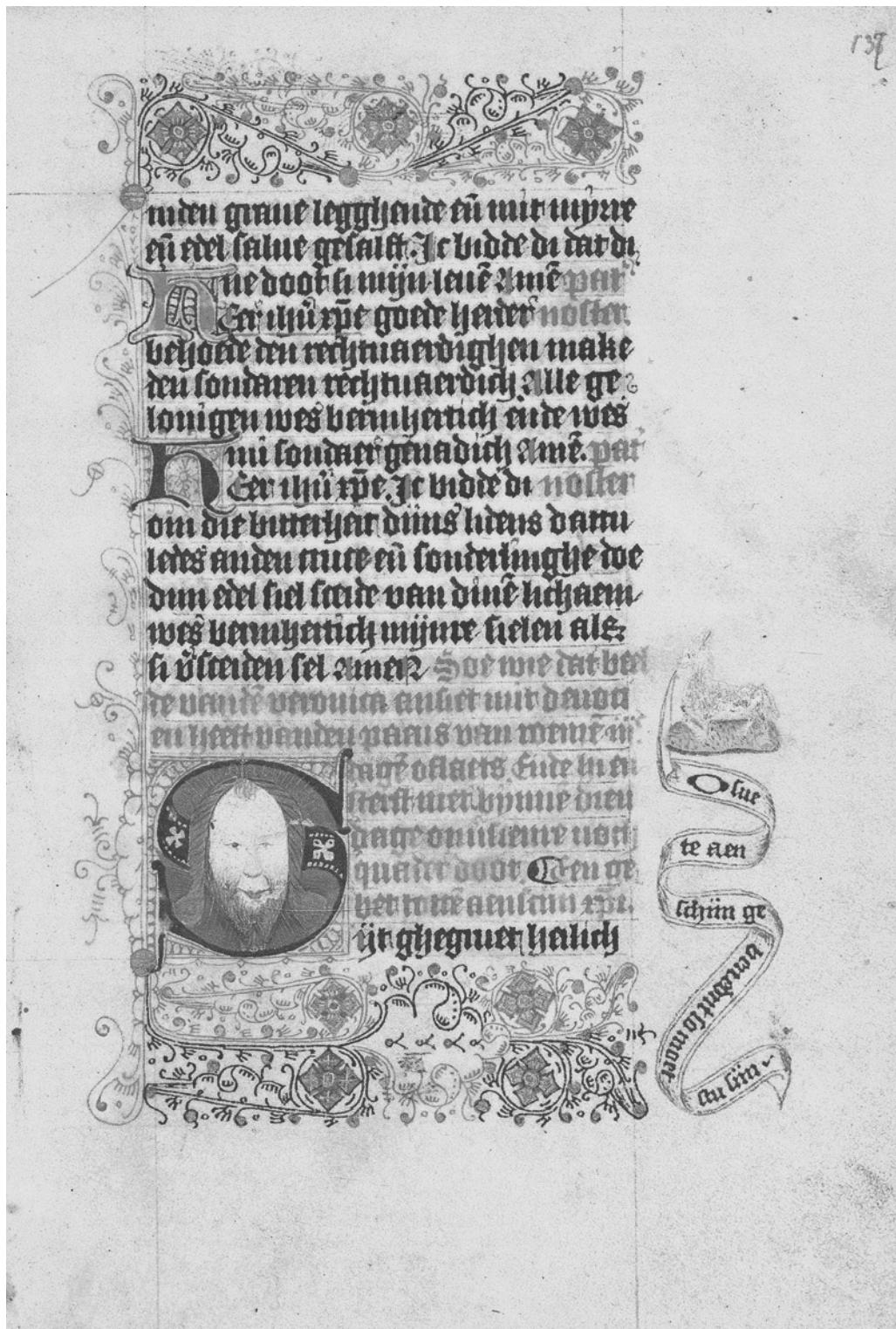
heit Amen. van desen paternoster heest
men rachtich dusent karinen: En wie de
se paternosteren voor screuen enen anden
voort leert die heest dat selue olaet.

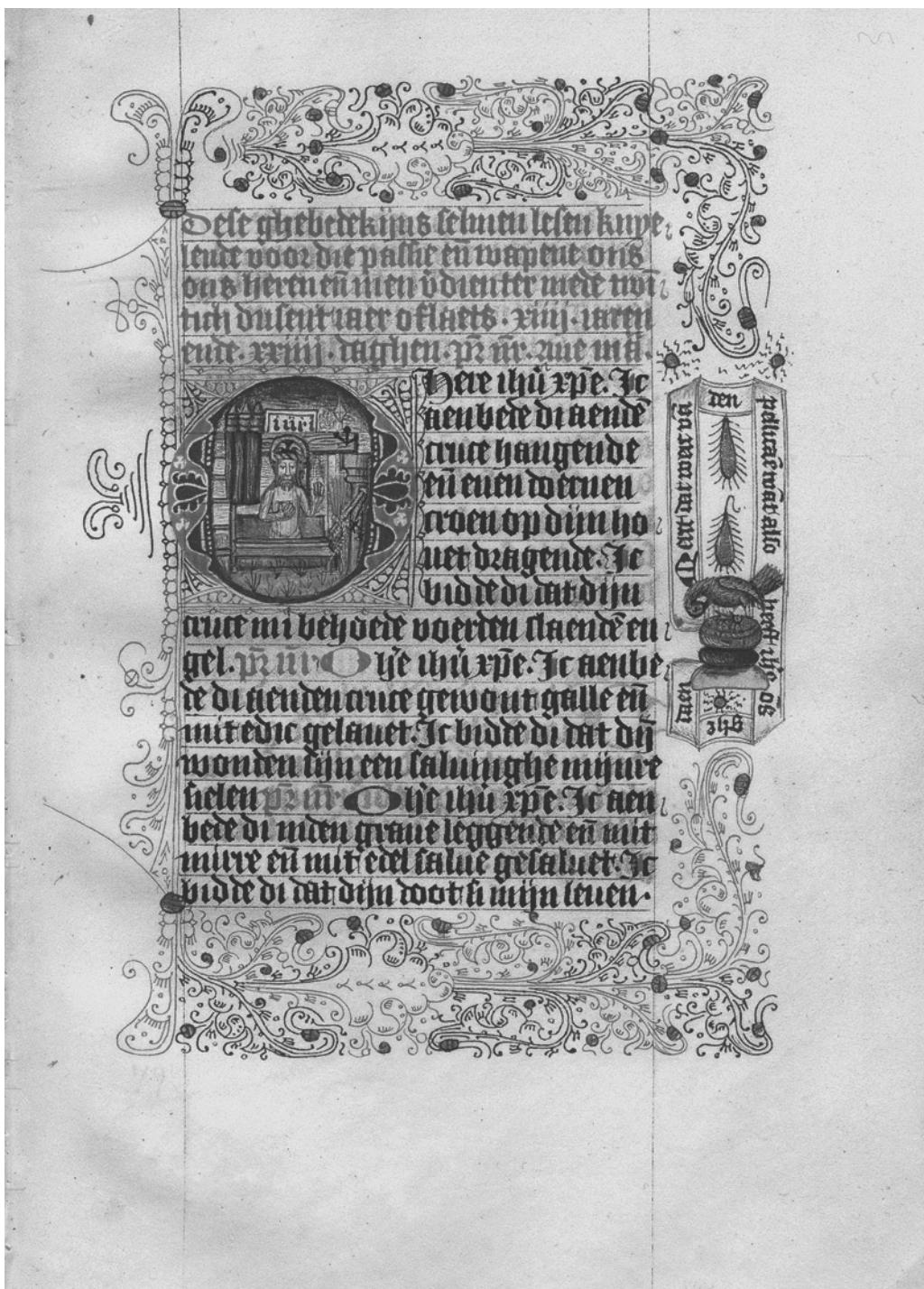
Hoe wie dit gebedekijn leest die ver
dient seuen iaer olaers en seuen karum
Dat heest broeder van brugman vertegen
vanden paens also ditke alsmeint des dae

Die ongedeelde heilige dreghes leest
wondich ihus xpis gedot en ghe
arreste menschen en die gloriole waagt
maria si gebenedict van allen creaturen
van nu ende tot allen tiden Amen. **H**oe
wie dit gevert mit gewangen rouwe en
mett eide mit gebogen huyen xix dage
lant an malander leest die mach sonden
twijel hopen te vertrige dat hi eysscher bi
dier sypeliken leest en niet en eysscher dien
worden gegenen dertich dageu olaet.

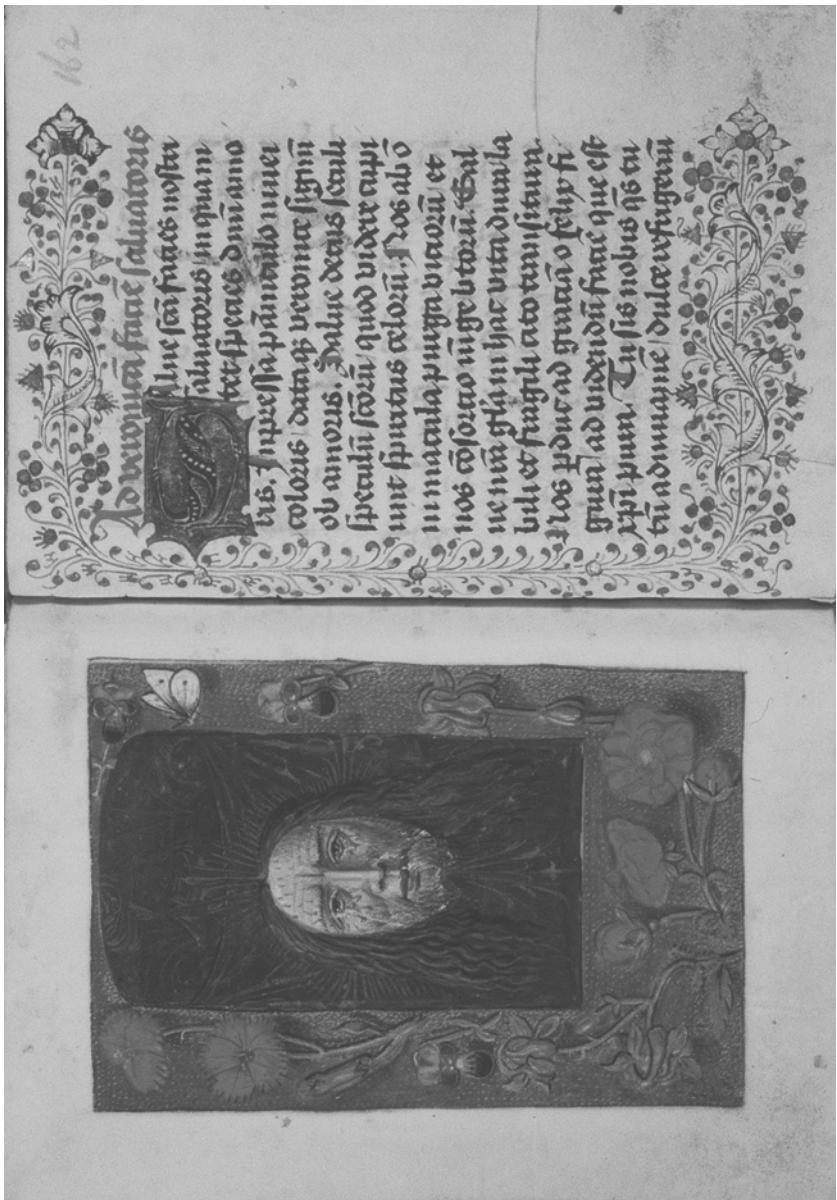
Sebenedicte vrou sinte maria
ewige maget der mageden moe
der der goedenieren ih; eude der ou







[PLATE XIV. RUDY – Fig. 8, p. 461]



[PLATE XV. RUDY – Fig. 10, p. 469]



[PLATE XVI. RUDY – Fig. 12, p. 473]



[PLATE XVII. RUDY – Fig. 13, p. 474]



[PLATE XVIII. DE JONG – Fig. 2, p. 539]



[PLATE XIX. DE JONG – Fig. 4, p. 546]



[PLATE XX. DE JONG – Fig. 8, p. 549]



I. *VERBUM VISIBLE*:
THE AUTHORITY OF THE VISIBLE WORD

THE DOMINICAN, THE DUKE AND THE BOOK.
THE AUTHORITY OF THE WRITTEN WORD IN DIRC VAN
DELFT'S *TAFEL VAN DEN KERSTEN GELOVE* (CA. 1400)

Geert Warnar

Eyn boech ist eyn versaminghe der bledere, geschriben
mit federen, mit boistoben von dynthe, eyn verges-
sen schaz, eyn cleynoit nit zu vergelden das dye
wysen su^chent und dye gecken verbirnt

Introduction

A book is a collection of leaves, written on with a quill (pen) with letters of ink, a forgotten treasure, a priceless jewel that is searched for by wise men and that is burned by fools. This aphorism is found in the *Table of the Christian Faith and Life* (*dye tafel vain dem kristen gelaufe und leven*), a fifteenth-century compilation surviving in two manuscripts from the Trier region.¹ The *Tafel*, written by the learned Dominican Dirc van Delft, is a religious encyclopedia in five treatises for the educated laity, that summarize the full scope of ecclesiastical, devotional, contemplative, political and eschatological knowledge for the educated laity, in particular the aristocratic elite of the original dedicatee: Albert Duke of Bavaria and Count of Holland from 1358–1404.

¹ See on this as yet unedited compilation, Warnar G., “Het dubbele paspoort van de Middelnederlandse letterkunde”, *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 125 (2009) 201–205. For a survey of the contents, Roth G., “Die *Tafel vom christlichen Glauben und Leben*. Die Westdeutsche Bearbeitung von Dircs van Delft *Tafel van den Kersten Ghelove*”, *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 130 (2001) 321–329. The citation is from manuscript Berleburg, Schloßbibliothek von Sayn-Wittgenstein RT 2–2, fol. 398v (hereafter cited as ms. Berleburg). The other manuscript is Darmstadt, Hessischen Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek 2667 (hereafter cited as ms. Darmstadt). See for a description of this manuscript Staub K. – Sänger Th., *Deutsche und niederländische Handschriften mit Ausnahme der Gebetbuchhandschriften. Die Handschriften der Hessischen Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek Darmstadt*, vol. VI (Wiesbaden: 1991) 123–128. I have benefited from the research of Renée Jaarsma, who focuses on these manuscripts in her M.A. thesis (Leiden University).

According to a note in one of the manuscripts Albert passed away before the *Tafel* had been completed.²

The definition of the book appears in the fifty-first chapter of the *Tafel*, dealing with numerous ‘questions of the emperor Hadrian to which the pagan master responded in writing’³. The pagan master is the ancient philosopher Secundus, who had chosen to remain silent ever since causing the death of his mother. Having learned in the schools of Athens that all women are weak in resisting temptation (‘omnis mulier meritrix, das ist alle wyber synt kranck von wyderstaen’), Secundus decided to test this truism upon his return home. Disguised as a pilgrim and without identifying himself, he made it known to his mother that he wanted to sleep with her. The mother died of shame when she learned she had given in to her son. Stricken with remorse, Secundus henceforth refused to speak, even when – many years after – he was sent for by the emperor Hadrian, who was eager to learn from the philosopher. When Secundus kept his silence before the emperor, he was sentenced to death. However, Hadrian was so impressed by the philosopher that he ordered the executioner to spare Secundus if he would persist in his silence. As Secundus did not speak out, he was brought back to Hadrian and was asked to write down his answers to the emperor’s questions. Therefore the second part of the Secundus-legend is a long series of questions on God, man, day, the heavens, the sun, the sea, a ship, prosperity, poverty and even the book.⁴

Now almost forgotten, the story of the silent philosopher Secundus was popular in the Middle Ages. The Latin *Vita Secundi* (translated from the Greek in the tenth century by the Parisian master Willelmus Medicus) survives in over a hundred medieval manuscripts.⁵ The story was transmitted through widely read works like the *Speculum historiale* by Vincentius of Beauvais and found its way into the vernacular languages of France, Spain, England, Germany and even Iceland.

² On Dirc van Delft, see Oostrom F.P. van, *Court and Culture. Dutch Literature, 1350–1450* (Berkeley et al.: 1992) 172–218. Edition of the *Tafel* in *Dirc van Delfts Tafel van den kersten gelove*, ed. L.M. Daniëls, 4 vols. (Antwerp et al.: 1937–1939).

³ ‘fragen des keyzers Adrianus do dye heydeschen meyster in schriftt zu antwerften’ (ms. Berleburg, fol. 391r; see fols. 391r–400r for the whole chapter).

⁴ Identification of the Secundus legend in Wachinger B., “Secundus”, in Wachinger B. et alii (eds.), *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*, vol. XI (Berlin: 2004) cols. 1402–1408.

⁵ See for the origins and transmission of the Secundus legend, Wachinger, “Secundus”; and Perry B.E., *Secundus the Silent Philosopher. The Greek Life of Secundus* (Ithaca: 1964).

The popularity of Secundus fits within a broader medieval interest in a special type of wisdom literature: long series of questions and answers presented within a narrative frame of a ruler being taught by a philosopher.⁶ The *Vita Secundi* was entertainment for the intellectual elite of clerics: outright misogynous in the story of Secundus and his mother, and full of aphorisms, oxymora and other rhetorical *trouvailles* in the answers to the questions of Hadrian.⁷ The definition of the book typifies the tone of Secundus' answers: describing the material object as a wonderful treasure, but leaving it to the reader to discover that the book is valuable because of its contents – which is the reason why wise men search for books while fools burn them.

Playful, ironic or straightforwardly didactic texts like the *Vita Secundi* signify the authority of the learned over the powerful.⁸ The reworking of the *Vita Secundi* in the *Tafel* particularly stressed the prestige of the philosopher, by adding a new ending to the story of Secundus that highlights his intellectual authority. Wondering about an appropriate reward for the philosopher, Hadrian orders that Secundus' notes be distributed as a school book, for the instruction of all who might show an interest.⁹ This twist at the end of the story, which has not been found in any of the Latin copies or other translations of the *Vita Secundi*, is all the more meaningful when considered together with the definition of the book, cited above. This has no counterpart in the Latin tradition either, although the original *Vita Secundi* incorporates questions on the letter and the word. The translator apparently wished to give pride of place to books in the preservation and distribution of learning.

The adaptation of the *Vita Secundi* in the *Tafel* is a wonderful illustration of the growing significance of the book in late medieval textual culture and the transmission of learning in written form. The tenth-century *Vita Secundi* originated in the culture of the cathedral schools

⁶ Cardelle de Hartmann C., *Lateinische Dialoge 1200–1400. Literaturhistorische Studie und Repertorium* (Leiden – Boston: 2007) 61.

⁷ On the nature of Secundus' answers, Philonenko M., “Les oxymores de Secundus”, in *Comptes-rendus des séances de l’année – Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 135 (1991) 373–389.

⁸ Cf. the fictitious history of the *Livre de Sidrac*, discussed in Luff R., *Wissensvermittlung im europäischen Mittelalter. Imago mundi'-Werke und ihre Prolog* (Tübingen: 1999) 159–213, or the tradition of the *Secretum secretorum*, presented as a letter of Aristotle to Alexander (which will be discussed later).

⁹ ‘das man is lese und bedude alle den willighen horeren’ (ms. Berleburg, fol. 399v).

and their masters, whose reputation as teachers was based on presence and performance rather than on their written works.¹⁰ By the time the German version of the *Vita Secundi* was composed new balances had been established. The master and his individual teaching found their lasting representation in the authority of the written word, that could be consulted by generations of readers. The fifteenth-century position of the book justified the changes to the original story of Secundus. Confronted with the silent philosopher, Hadrian is happy with the invention of the ‘art of speaking live sentences with dead letters’ – again a statement not to be found in the Latin legend of Secundus.¹¹

Attuned to the intellectual culture of written texts, the ‘bookish’ version of the *Vita Secundi* turns away from the charismatic culture of individual teaching. It thus acknowledges crucial changes occurring in the medieval perception of the authority of the word. However, the German reworking of the *Vita Secundi* has a more specific meaning within the compilation for which the text seems to have been prepared: *dye tafel vain dem kristen gelaufe und leven* or – as it was called originally – *Tafel van den kersten gelove*. Its author, Dirc van Delft, was court chaplain to Duke Albert of Bavaria and a professor in theology at the universities of Erfurt and Cologne. His high profile allowed him to act as a new Secundus to Duke Albert, who might have felt compelled to follow Hadrian’s example in showing respect for the wise philosopher and endorsing the dissemination of Dirc’s *Tafel*. Although this is not really hinted at in the text, the new ending to the Secundus legend and the special emphasis on the book invite us to look at the *Tafel vanden kersten gelove* as a fifteenth century counterpart to Secundus’ tablets: written for the emperor but eventually sent into the world for the education of all. The wide transmission of the *Tafel* in manuscript and in incunabula editions signals the success of Dirc’s work.¹² This paper traces how Dirc textualizes his teachings for the duke to enhance the authority of the word. For this purpose the hitherto unexplored German version of the *Tafel* will turn out to be of special significance.

¹⁰ Cf. Jaeger C.S., *The Envy of Angels. Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950–1200* (Philadelphia: 1994).

¹¹ ‘[...] künste haint ghevonden mit doden boistoeffen lijfliche synne zü sprechen’ (ms. Berleburg, fol. 393r).

¹² On the transmission of the *Tafel*, Oostrom F.P. van, *Aanvaard dit werk. Over Middelnederlandse auteurs en hun publiek* (Amsterdam: 1992) 152–170.

The Tafel in Context

The *Tafel* was one of the most ambitious texts in medieval Dutch literature, transforming the specialized scholastic tradition of the summa into a book of theological learning for an aristocratic lay elite. Dealing with God, creation, man's inner faculties and physical powers, virtues, vices, salvation history, the sacraments, works of mercy, ecclesiastical hierarchy and eschatology, Dirc van Delft hardly left out anything a late medieval Christian needed to know. His principal source was a theological textbook for clerics, students and educated priests: the *Compendium theologicae veritatis*, written by the Dominican Hugo Ripelin of Strassbourg. A long list of additional sources for the *Tafel*, including Thomas Aquinas' *Summa theologica*, Peter Lombard's *Sententia* and William Durandus' *Rationale divinorum officium*, reveals Dirc's theological expertise.¹³ Even more indicative of the *Tafel*'s sophistication is Dirc's technical approach. Contrary to the straightforward teaching to be found in contemporary catechetical manuals in the (Dutch) vernacular, the *Tafel* comprises a long series of scholastic *quaestiones*, providing ample evidence of the author's intellectual capacities.¹⁴

Dirc acted as an intermediary between the world of academic learning and the vernacular literacy of his aristocratic patron, tuning the technical vocabulary of professional theology to the religious practices of the educated laity.¹⁵ In a detailed analysis of the *Tafel van den kersten gelove*, Frits van Oostrom pointed out the author's awareness of how to address a duke and his courtly entourage.¹⁶ Developing sophisticated allegories of chivalry and courtly culture, Dirc attempted to make religious learning accessible for an audience that probably

¹³ On the Compendium, Steer G., *Hugo Ripelin von Strassburg. Zur Rezeptions- und Wirkungsgeschichte des „Compendium theologicae veritatis“ im deutschen Spätmittelalter* (Tübingen: 1981). The introduction to the edition of *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* (vol. I) lists the main identified sources. The commentary to the edition mentions additional sources.

¹⁴ On medieval Dutch literature of religious instruction, Warnar G., "Biecht, gebod en zonde. Middelnederlandse moraaltheologie voor de wereldlijke leek", in Mertens T. et alii (eds.), *Boeken voor de eeuwigheid. Middelnederlands geestelijk proza* (Amsterdam: 1993) 36–51.

¹⁵ Cf. Warnar G., "Men of Letters. Medieval Dutch Literature and Learning", in Hoenen M.J.F.M. – Cesalli L. – Germann N. (eds.), *University, Council, City. Intellectual Culture on the Rhine (1300–1550)* (Turnhout: 2007) 221–246.

¹⁶ Van Oostrom, *Court and Culture* 177–191.

knew how to dress for a banquet, better than how to appreciate theological subtleties.

In Van Oostrom's portrait, Dirc is the court chaplain and the preacher, whose authority was based on his religious position. Dirc's academic approach and interests also made him a man of learning – a philosopher like Secundus. Large portions of the *Tafel* deal with the sacraments, vices and virtues and other forms of traditional religion, but there is no reason to think of Dirc's work only as the pastoral theology of a chaplain. Dirc wrote the *Tafel* to guide his patron toward religious awareness, but also to introduce him to a world of learning and moral information that would make him a better ruler. From Dirc's sources and interventions it is clear that the Dominican had a special interest in the themes that are associated with the medieval mirrors of princes and the education of rulers. The *Vita Secundi* is only one in a series of chapters on government and law, kings and their philosophers and ancient wisdom.

However, taking the translated *Vita Secundi* with its ruler, philosopher and philosopher's book as a frame of interpretation for the *Tafel*, requires some justification. At present, over twenty manuscripts of the *Tafel* are known, mostly from the Netherlands, but the legend of the silent philosopher and his teachings is only found in the two manuscripts from the Trier region, dating from the middle of the fifteenth century. A reference to the *jonckeren* [= lords] *von Rodemachern* appears in both manuscripts and connects the compilation to the seigniory Rodemack in the Lorraine; one of the manuscripts was owned by the noble lady Margarethe of Nassau, who was married to Gerhard of Rodemachern.¹⁷

This German version of the *Tafel* has been considered a later reworking of Dirc's original work. The Rodemachern compilation differs substantially from the text that circulated in the Netherlands. The

¹⁷ Margarethe's copy was ms. Berleburg. See on her extremely interesting collection of books, Haubrichs W., "Die 'Pilgerfahrt des träumenden Mönchs'. Eine poetische Übersetzung Elisabeths aus dem Französischen?" in Haubrichs W. – Herrmann H.-W. (eds.), *Zwischen Deutschland und Frankreich. Elisabeth von Lothringen, Gräfin von Nassau-Saarbrücken* (Saarbrücken: 2002) 533–568, and in the same volume (591–606), Stork H.W., "Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke Elisabeths von Nassau-Saarbrücken und die malerische Ausstattung der Handschriften". See on the origins of the ms. Darmstadt, Staub – Sänger, *Deutsche und niederländische Handschriften* 123. Both manuscripts have the same text (except for one chapter, missing in ms. Berleburg) and could have been copied from the same exemplar.

Dutch *Tafel* was divided into a Winter part and a Summer part (similar to collections of sermons or Saint's lives that cover the liturgical year), but the German version includes only forty-four chapters from the Summer subsection, to which are added another twenty chapters that have no parallel in the Dutch tradition – including the story of Secundus. The German version of the *Tafel* is split up into five treatises, although the original division of a Summer Part and Winter part is still acknowledged. The prologue to the German version states – after listing the chapters of the Summer Part – that the Winter part will be even larger, but 'this I have not yet finished completely'.¹⁸ It is not clear whether Dirc van Delft is speaking here, or an anonymous compiler. In any case the Rodemachern compilation represents an extended version of the *Tafel*, as references to the Winter part are incorporated into the German manuscripts. It is far from certain that Dirc wrote or translated all the added material, but the evidence is that he must have been involved in the extended version, as will be shown in the course of this essay. Therefore, I take Dirc as the architect of the extended *Tafel*.

Inasmuch as the added texts in the Rodemachern compilation can be identified, all sources point to the Netherlands.¹⁹ This suggests that the compilation was made in the Low Countries before it found its way to the German lands. The key to understanding the migration of the Dutch *Tafel* is an introductory note in Margarethe's copy, stating that Dirc had started to work on the *Tafel* for Albert, who died before the book was finished. Therefore the *Tafel* was delivered to Albert's son John of Bavaria, the bishop elect of Liege.²⁰ Through John the *Tafel* can be linked to the Rodemachern family. In 1419, when John of Bavaria had become the count of Holland, he married Elisabeth of Görlitz, who at that time held the hereditary rights to the duchy of Luxembourg. The marriage made John duke of Luxembourg. One of his vassals was

¹⁸ 'Und do myde sal ende haven dat soemerstuck vain dysen boecke. Dat winterstuck sal noch groisser syen und dat en hain ich noch nit alle volmacht' (*Dirc van Delfts Tafel*, I 113).

¹⁹ Cf. the excerpt taken from the Dutch translation of Henry Suso's *Horologium sapientiae*, the full copy of the Dutch translation of Gérard of Vlierden's *Cordiale quatuor novissimorum* and the rhymed allegory of the hunt for Christ (see Staub – Sänger, *Deutsche und niederländische Handschriften* 126).

²⁰ The note is cited in *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* I 115. On John of Bavaria, Schneider F., *Herzog Johann von Baiern. Erwählter Bischof von Lüttich und Graf von Holland* (1372–1425) (Berlin: 1913).

Johann of Rodemachern, the future father-in-law of the Margarethe who owned one of the German *Tafel* manuscripts. Johann appears as one of the bailiffs of the duchy of Luxembourg from 1419 onwards. John of Bavaria visited Luxembourg only once, but his widow Elisabeth would eventually return to the duchy after long years of financial trouble and political intrigue.²¹ Johann of Rodemachern was actively involved in the politics that concerned Luxembourg. This brought him close to Elisabeth. In 1427, Rodemachern was with her in Brussels at the ducal court of Brabant and afterwards he probably escorted her to Low Countries.²² Here he could have come across the version of the *Tafel* that Dirc had been working on when Albert had died and that was given to John of Bavaria.²³

In any case, no matter how the *Tafel* came to Rodemachern, the extended version seems to have originated in the Netherlands, probably in the Dutch court circle for which the first copies of Dirc's book were produced. Moreover, it is likely that Dirc was involved in this new version.²⁴ Therefore this paper takes the story of Secundus as a frame of reference for reading the *Tafel* as a treatise in the literary tradition of a ruler being taught by his philosopher, and for relating it to the specific situation of Dirc and Albert.

²¹ See on Elisabeth and her political troubles, the summary in Stein R., "De affaire Van Borselen en de consolidatie van de Bourgondische macht in de Nederlanden (1425–1435)", *Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 124 (2009) 12–14.

²² Würth-Paquet F.-X., "Table chronologique des chartes et diplômes relatifs à l'histoire de l'ancien pays de Luxembourg. Règne de Sigismond", *Publications de la section historique de l'institut royal grand-ducal de Luxembourg* 26 (1871) 41. See also 47, for an entry of 1429, recording that Elisabeth ceded the seigniory of Montmédy to Johann of Rodemachern to pay her debts to this nobleman.

²³ It could also be that Elisabeth brought this version of the *Tafel* with her when she returned to Luxembourg. She spent her last years in Trier. According to her last will, her confessor was a local Dominican, *bruder Johann*. Here again, there is a direct link with the Rodemachern. One of Margarethe of Rodemachern's other books was copied by a Dominican in Trier; see Schmid G. and W., "Das Grabmal der Elisabeth von Görlitz (†1451) – Frühwerk des Nikolaus Gerhaert in Trier?", *Publications de la section historique de l'institut G.D. de Luxembourg* 110 (1994) 171–220, esp. 173–181 and 208–210. Cf. Stork, "Die handschriftliche Überlieferung" 593, for Margarethe's manuscript produced by a Dominican of Trier.

²⁴ It is certain that different versions of the *Tafel* were circulated: the oldest manuscripts have a specific distribution of chapters over the Winter and Summer parts, that has been changed in later copies, in which Dirc added new chapters to the Summer part. The German version is linked to the oldest *Tafel* manuscripts. Cf. the discussion of the manuscripts in *Dirc van Delfts Tafel I* 111–117.

The Dominican and the Duke

In the manuscript of Margarethe of Rodemachern, the leaf with the prologue has been torn out (like two thirds of the illuminated leaves), but it was probably the same text that we find in its twin copy, setting out the intentions of the author:

In order to instruct and teach you how you may learn to know your God and creator and love his commandments and keep and practice your faith, I have composed – for your grace, love and honor – a book called the *Table of Christian Faith and Life*.²⁵

This is not just standard dedicatory language. Dirc owed his career to Albert. The letter of appointment, issued by the duke in 1399, points out that the Dominican came to preach and teach (*leren ende prediken*) at the court, after Albert's sponsorship climaxed in Dirc's becoming the only professor of theology in Holland.²⁶ In his prologue Dirc refers explicitly to Albert's generosity and efforts on his behalf, offering the book in return:

Because, worthy and noble lord, I would gladly and willingly serve your grace, just as you have kindly cared for me, I humbly beg you now and then to take the *Tafel* in your hand, thus to pass the time and avoid idleness, so that you – while reading something good – find reason to think of the salvation of your soul.²⁷

The allusion to Albert's support ('as you have kindly cared for me') is only found in the prologue of the German text, which again suggests that this version of the *Tafel* is closely connected to Dirc. The intimate

²⁵ 'Up dat ich moghe wysen ende leren wo myde dat ir uwen gode und schepper kennen moghent und lieff habent syen ewe und gelaufe zu halden und ouch uch bas moghent hoeden, dar umb so hain ich uwer genaden, uwer liefden und eren gemacht eyn boech genant dye tafel vain dem kristen gelaufe und leven' (ms. Darmstadt fol. 1r, cited after *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* I 118).

²⁶ 'Over the years we have helped Master Dirc van Delft of the Jacobin preaching order at Utrecht to attend many schools until such time as he became a *doctor in theologia*, meaning master of divinity'. Now Dirc is admitted 'to teach and to preach in our chapels to our servants and familiars'. Cited after the translation in Van Oostrom, *Court and Culture* 173–174.

²⁷ 'Und want ich, wirdich edel heerre, uwer genade gerne und willich zu dynst wulde syen, gelyck als ir groislchen umb mich verdyent haint, so wil ich uch oit-moedeclichen bidden, dat ir dan dy tafel zu wilien in uwer hant willet nemen umb zyt verdryff, umb ledicheyt und ydelheyt zu schuwen uff dat ir wat gutz lesent oirsach zu nemen umb uwer selen selicheyt zu denken' (ms. Darmstadt fol. 1v, cited after *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* vol. I 118).

relationship between author and dedicatee is emphasized further in the accompanying miniature that shows Dirc writing at his desk and Albert holding the book [Fig.1].²⁸ In this image of the author and his patron, Albert and Dirc appear as the ruler and his philosopher. It is not by chance that the introduction to the Summer part of the *Tafel* gives the credentials of both the duke and the Dominican:

This book is called the *Table of the Christian Faith and Life* and is written and produced for the honor and love and special request of the highly born ruler, emperor Ludwig's son, duke Albert, who is by God's grace duke of Bavaria, *Palzgraf* on the Rhine, count of Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland [and] lord of Frisia, [and the book is written] by a humble Dominican, called friar Dirc van Delft, master in divinity and regent master at the universities of Erfurt and Cologne.²⁹

Both Albert's imperial descent and Dirc's academic position are highlighted. The author of the *Tafel* is introduced as a man of letters rather than as the court chaplain.³⁰ This was not only to enhance the prestige of the *Tafel* and emphasize that its author had received ducal patronage. Mentioning Dirc's university credentials also underlined his intellectual authority and therefore his position in the text. He was the learned regent master, instructing a monarch, in the manner that Secundus had taught Hadrian. The reader of the *Tafel* is reminded repeatedly, if not continually, of this ideal relationship between a ruler and his philosopher. This holds true especially for the German version, that not only includes the story of Secundus, but also an adaptation of *De remediis fortuitorum*, ascribed to the 'wise Seneca, who was the evil emperor Nero's master' ('der wijse senica der des boesen keyser nero

²⁸ Ms. Darmstadt fol. 1r. The image is strikingly similar to a miniature in a Dutch copy of the Winter Part of the *Tafel* (ms. Brussels, Royal Library 21974), dated 1442. See on the early manuscripts of the *Tafel*, Rickert M., "The Illuminated Manuscripts of Meester Dirc van Delft's *Tafel van den kersten ghelove*", *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery* 12 (1949) 78–108; on the Brussels manuscript and Darmstadt, 102–104.

²⁹ 'Dat buch das heisset dy daffel von dem [dem] Cristen glaube und leben und ist gedichte und gemacht zu der ere und liebe und von sunderlicher [bevelinghe] dez hochgeborenen forsten Keyser Lodovichs sone hertzogh albrecht von der godes genaden hertzoghe von beyren, Paltzgrave uff den ryne, grave von hennegouw, von hollant von zelant und here von fryslant von eym oitmoegehen predyer genant broder dederich von delff, meyster in der heiligen schrift und regent in der universitet en van Erfphort und von Colen' (ms. Berleburg fol. 1r, cited after *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* I 115).

³⁰ This introduction is taken over in later copies of the *Tafel*. Even a late fifteenth-century printed edition of two chapters of the *Tafel* reminds readers that the text was written by *Dirck van Delft, doctoer inder godheit, een oetmoedich prediker*; see Pleij H., "Dirc van Delft in Göttingen", *Literatuur* 7 (1990) 325–326.

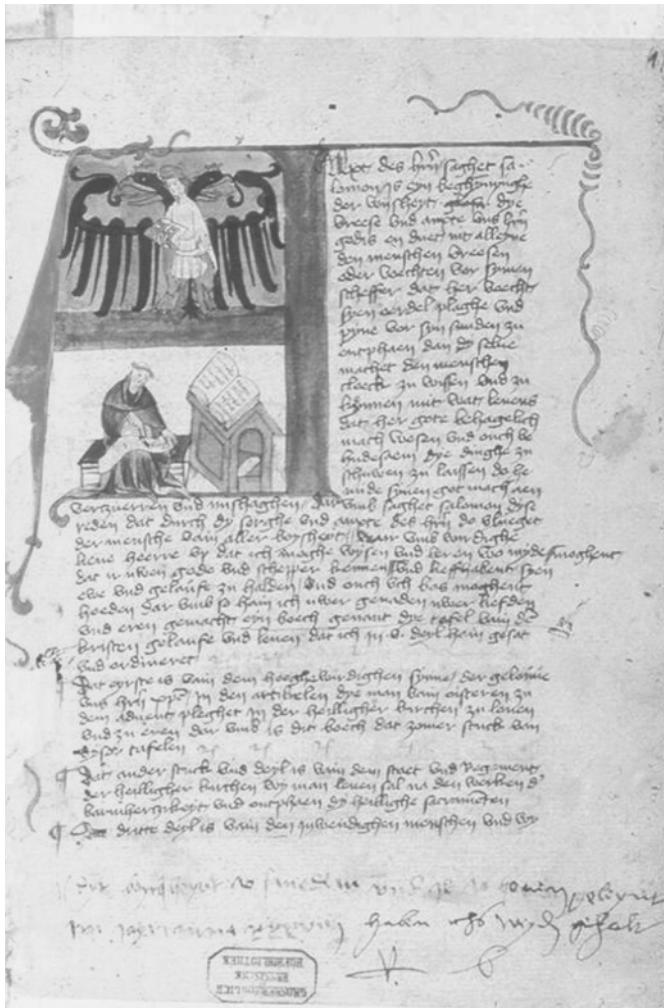


Fig. 1. *Dirc van Delft and his Patron Albert of Bavaria*, Ms. Darmstadt, Hessische Landes- und Hochschulbibliothek 2667, fol. 1r.

meyster was'), and a manual for rulers modeled on Aristotle's letter to Alexander the Great, known as the *Secretum secretorum*.³¹ The miniature introducing this last chapter in the manuscript of Margarethe of Rodemachern again shows a master writing for a monarch [Fig. 2].

The added chapters in the German version of the *Tafel* demonstrate a special interest in classical *exempla* of rulers being educated.³² It is something that Dirc points out explicitly in a chapter with exempla and short narratives from ancient and Roman times on the cardinal virtues:

We read that when the emperors, kings, dukes, lords used to be educated people. This was the age of the golden world and the common good was guaranteed. This is why the emperor Trajan wrote to the king of France that he let his children be educated in the seven liberal arts, because – he said – an uneducated king would be like a crowned ass. In the past the lords used to have masters with them by whom they were taught. The emperor Trajan had Policratum, Nero had Seneca, Alexander had Aristotle.³³

³¹ Cf. the description of the Darmstadt manuscript in Staub – Sänger, *Deutsche und niederländische Handschriften* 127 and for the identification of the *De remediis fortuitorum* translation Warnar G., "The Discovery of the Dialogue in Dutch Medieval Literature. A Discourse for Meditation and Disputation", in Enenkel K. – Melion W. (eds.), *Meditatio. Discourses of Meditation in Art and Literature, 1300–1600*, Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 17 (Leiden: 2011) 69–88. The *Secretum secretorum* will be discussed later.

³² In light of Dirc's academic career, it should be pointed out here that a famous Erfurt library catalogue of ca. 1412 mentions a manuscript with *De remediis fortuitorum*, the *Vita Secundi* and the letter of Aristotle to Alexander – three texts that appear in the extended version of the *Tafel*. The manuscript, now lost, was owned by the learned physician and book collector Amplonius de Berck, who donated his complete library of over 300 manuscripts to the university of Erfurt in 1412. See Schum W., *Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der Ampronianischen Handschriften-Sammlung zu Erfurt* (Berlin: 1887) 814. Dirc van Delft and De Berck must have met earlier in life. De Berck had been teaching at the universities of Erfurt (1393–1395) and Cologne (1399–1401). At both universities he was rector. De Berck might have matriculated Dirc in Erfurt, and they certainly were together in Cologne. Dirc was there in 1403, possibly working on the *Tafel*; cf. *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* I 19. There is much to say for the hypothesis that Dirc had access to De Berck's extremely important library and used the manuscript. See on the growth of the library. Kadenbach J., "Die Bibliothek des Ampronius Rating de Berck. Entstehung, Wachstum, Profil", in Speer A. (ed.), *Die Bibliotheca Amproniana. Ihre Bedeutung im Spannungsfeld von Aristotelismus, Nominalismus und Humanismus* (Berlin – New York: 1994) 16–31.

³³ 'Wi lesen, dat die wijl dat die keyseren, coninghen, hertoghen, heren gheleert plaghen te wesen ende constich, so stont die gulden werelt ende die gemeen oerbaer was gheoect. Hier-om screef Troianus die keyser den coninc van Vrancrijc, dat hi sijn kinder liet leren die seven vrie consten, want hi seide, dat een ongheleert coninc waer als een ghecroent esel. Hier voirmaels plaghen die heren meesteren bi hem te hebben,

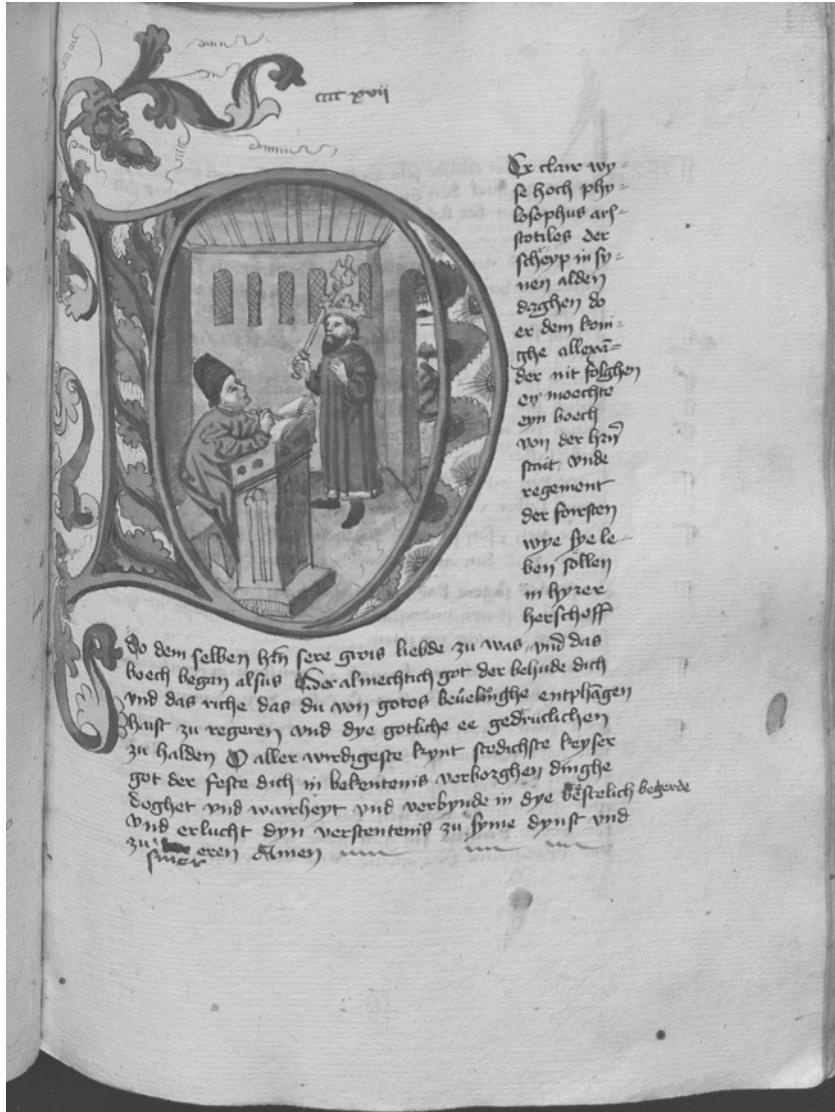


Fig. 2. Aristotle Writing for Alexander the Great, Ms. Berleburg, Schloßbibliothek von Sayn-Wittgenstein RT 2-2, fol. 416v.

Dirc must have read this in John of Wales' *Breviloquium de virtutibus* or one of its adaptations.³⁴ The thirteenth century Franciscan John of Wales had collected a series of stories from antiquity and refurbished them to serve the purposes of Christian doctrine on the cardinal virtues. The *Breviloquium* must have appealed to Dirc because of its focus on rulers; the text has been qualified as a mirror of princes.³⁵ However, Dirc had access to a larger collection of classical exempla, which were handed down in miscellanies with the works of classicising friars like John of Wales.³⁶

Typical for Dirc's treatment of this material is a story of Alexander the Great, whose reputed interest in women led the king of Sicily to surprise him with the four most beautiful queens he could find. The company of these women made Alexander as happy as he had been at his coronation, especially when the queens escorted him to a wonderful bed draped with four curtains. But on these curtains four persons with scrolls were depicted. One scroll read: I am more blessed than the queen of Sicily, and above the figure holding the scroll appeared the inscription *Prudencia*. Another scroll held by Justice read: I am more enlightened than the queen of the Provence. And the two other scrolls held by Fortitude and Temperance had similar messages. After reading the words on the curtains, Alexander thanked the king, who first had

diese plagen te leren. Troianus die keyser hadde Policratum, Nero hadde Senecam, Alexander hadde Aristotilem' (*Dirc van Delfts Tafel* III 500).

³⁴ See on John of Wales, Diem A., "A Classicising Friar at Work. John of Wales' *Breviloquium de Virtutibus*", in MacDonald A.A. – Martels Z. von – Veenstra J. (eds.), *Christian Humanism. Essays in Honor of Arjo Vanderjagt* (Leiden: 2009) 75–102; and Swanson J., *John of Wales. A Study of the Works and Ideas of a Thirteenth-Century Friar* (Cambridge et alii: 1989) esp. 50 for the reference to Trajan and the *Institutio Trajani*. Dirc might have consulted the adaptation of the *Breviloquium* by Michael di Massa (*Communiologium*). There we find the same mistake as Dirc's (taking John of Salisbury's text *Policraticum* for a person, and substituting him for Trajan's advisor Plutarch). Cf. Kerner M. "Johannes von Salisbury im späteren Mittelalter", in Miethke J. – Bühler A. (eds.), *Das Publikum politischer Theorie im 14. Jahrhundert* (Oldenburg: 1992) 48, note 108.

³⁵ The full manuscript title of John of Wales' work is the *Breviloquium de virtutibus antiquorum principum et philosophorum* (Diem, "A Classicising Friar" 91–92).

³⁶ On Dirc van Delft and classic material (without taking into account the German material), Lievens R., "De 'heidense' Dirc van Delf", in Cardon B. – Van der Stock J. – Vanwijnsberghe D. et alii (eds.), "Als ich can" (Paris et al.: 2002) 815–842. Important work on Dirc's Latin sources appears in Palmer N.F., "Das 'Exempelwerk der englischen Bettelmönche': Ein Gegenstück zu den 'Gesta Romanorum'?", in Haug W. – Wachinger B. (eds.), *Exempel und Exempelsammlungen* (Tübingen: 1991) 137–172; and Smalley B., *English Friars and Antiquity in the Early Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: 1960) esp. 109–202 for the sources used by Dirc.

received him with beautiful women, and then taught him with exempla and images. The story is found in the *Gesta Romanorum*, although Dirc also used the *Moralitates* of Robert Holcot, a fourteenth century Oxford Dominican and ‘classicising friar’ like John of Wales. However, Holcot did not mention the cardinal virtues, but instead chose *obedientia, munditia, prudentia* and *amicitia* to create a *divisio thematis* for a sermon on the qualities of the Virgin Mary. Dirc managed to bring the story within the framework of the cardinal virtues that were more appropriate for a ruler.³⁷

Dirc was not only interested in the pedagogical potential of the *Moralitates*, *Gesta Romanorum* and related works. As the incorporation of the *Vita Secundi* suggests, the Dominican also cultivated his position as a learned cleric, familiar with classical material and capable of using this knowledge for the benefit of his addressee. The best case in point is the following chapter in the *Tafel*, that further explores material taken from classicising friars: a description of a series of paintings and images of virtues designed by the ‘pagan master philosophers’ (*heydensche meesters philosophen*) to teach the uneducated or – as Dirc writes rather bluntly – the ‘dumb people’ (*domme volc*). The chapter describes seven allegorical images, sculptures or paintings that represent love, wisdom, justice, mercy, humility and so forth. The descriptions are partly taken from *Fulgentius metaforalis* by John Ridevall, a text that is closely connected with the *Moralitates* by Holcot and the *Gesta Romanorum*.³⁸ The allegorical *picturae*, though used to provide religious and moral lessons, call attention to the author’s knowledge of classical literature and his command of the modes of education these text had to offer.

Moreover, the Roman exempla with texts inscribed on curtains, images and sculptures prepared the reader for more direct lessons by the author. In one of the following chapters Dirc describes the

³⁷ The story of Alexander occurs in *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* III 510–512, with reference to the *Gesta Romanorum*; see Lievens, “De ‘heidense’ Dirc van Delf” 825, and on Holcot’s version, Palmer, “Das ‘Exempelwerk der englischen Bettelmönche’” 142–143.

³⁸ *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* III 512–524; see Lievens, “De ‘heidense’ Dirc van Delf” 826–834, with an extensive discussion of the difficulties in assessing Dirc’s source. On *Fulgentius* and the *picturae*, Smalley, *English Friars and Antiquity* 109–136. Although one might expect otherwise, the evidence is that the *picturae* emerged in texts. Only earlier manuscripts have pictures inspired by *Fulgentius*; see Saxl F., “A Spiritual Encyclopaedia of the Later Middle Ages”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942) 82–142.

ceremonies on the occasion of the coronation of the (German) emperor. First he explains that the imperial throne has four pillars, on which are written the names of the cardinal virtues, that are of special significance for the monarch. After a short digression on the virtues (using the *Compendium theologicae veritatis*), Dirc describes the details of the crowning ceremony as he found them in Dutch chronicles with accounts of the thirteenth-century coronation of William, King of the Roman ('Roomskoning').³⁹ Dirc adds that after his crowning by the seven Prince-Electors (Kurfürsten), a notary reads to the emperor how he must act and govern his realm ('hoe hi hem sel in sijnen rijk regieren ende houden'). The reading takes the form of a short sermon on *Proverbs* 20:28: 'Mercy and truth preserve a king, and his throne is upheld by justice and mercy' ('Misericordia et veritas custodiunt regem justicia et clementia robatur thronus eius'). Essentially, however, it expounds the significance of the cardinal virtues: wisdom, justice, fortitude and temperance. The biblical citation also opens John of Wales' *Breviloquium*.⁴⁰

Dirc's treatment of the cardinal virtues demonstrates his primary concern for his ducal patron. The invention of a notary who reads to the ruler from a book, gives evidence of the Dominican's subtle approach. Dirc leaves it to Albert to draw the conclusion that he should take to heart what is read to him, or take notice of the ancient texts that were written for a ruler's education, such as Secundus' tablets for Hadrian and Aristotle's letter for Alexander. In the letter of Aristotle, it is mentioned explicitly that the ruler should either read or have read to him the old books ('dye bucher von den verganghen zijden'), in order to learn from history, since 'books address us like living masters' ('dye bucher uns recht als lebendighe meyster zu sprechen').⁴¹ All these references to books and writing (even on the columns of a throne) must be considered allusions to the *Tafel* and to the role of its author: he speaks through his text, like a living master who addresses his auditors.

³⁹ *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* III 551–567, including references to Dirc's sources. On Dirc's treatment of the cardinal virtues, also see Pansters K., *De kardinale deugden in de Lage Landen, 1200–1500* (Hilversum: 2007) 90–96.

⁴⁰ Swanson, *John of Wales* 42. The sermon on Proverbs 20:28 may be found in *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* III 559–561.

⁴¹ Ms. Berleburg, fol. 427r and fol. 423r.

Although always present in the *Tafel*, Dirc avoids any direct confrontation with his patron. Listing rules for preachers, he urges them to speak only in parables when castigating lords and rulers. Dirc reminds his readers of Aristotle who thus advised one of the pupils he sent to instruct Alexander. But the young man sharply criticized the emperor's rich clothing, and Alexander had the preacher's tongue cut out. Dirc prefers the approach of the philosopher who taught a Babylonian tyrant the game of chess in order to show him good government. This is a reference to a later chapter in the *Tafel*, which encompasses an abridged version of the *Ludus scaccorum*, an allegorical analysis of the pieces on a chessboard as symbols of political hierarchy and rulership. In the description and explanation of the king, Dirc follows the Latin original, again quoting *Proverbs* 20:28 on mercy and truth.⁴²

The quotation signals the interconnectedness of the *Ludus scaccorum* and such mendicant texts as John of Wales' *Breviloquium* or Holcot's *Moralitates*, that compiled material from the classical tradition to provide exemplary narratives. This mendicant literature, often gathered into miscellanies, did not have a great impact on vernacular literature – with the exception of the popular *Gesta Romanorum*. It was the learned friar Dirc van Delft, who first put these elite writings to use in a lay environment, but he did so for the particular purpose of instructing his patron.

The Tafel as a Mirror of Princes

The Rodemachern version of the *Tafel* especially shows Dirc's concern for monarchs. One of the sections in this version focuses on the status and government of the world ('dem staet und regement der werrelt').⁴³ This *tractatus* consists of twelve chapters. Several chapters that are also found in the Dutch version of the *Tafel* have been rearranged and new chapters have been added to create a comprehensive set of texts that aims at the instruction of the monarch. The *tractatus* starts with the stories from the *Breviloquium*, *picturae* from *Fulgentius* and

⁴² *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* III 344 (on Aristotle's pupil), 567–592 (on the allegory of chess); cf. Van Oostrom, *Court and Culture* 185.

⁴³ See for the treatises and the consecutive chapters, *Dirc van Delfts Tafel* I 113; Roth, "Die Tafel vom christlichen Glauben und Leben"; and Staub – Sänger, *Deutsche und niederländische Handschriften* 123–128.

an allegory on the armies of vice and virtue. Next, Dirc introduces the topic of biblical kingship in a chapter on Salomon as the archetype of the wise ruler with a summary of the Book of Proverbs (including *Proverbs* 20:28), followed by the *Vita Secundi*. These classical and biblical role models of wise rulers prepare the reader for a treatise ‘on the status and government of rulers’.⁴⁴ This is a genuine mirror of princes.

Explicitly introduced as a treatise that concerns rulers, *On Status and Government* is primarily religious in nature and outlook, like most of the medieval mirrors of princes.⁴⁵ The most important point of reference is *De regimine principum*, an Italian manual for princes, perhaps partly written by Thomas Aquinas.⁴⁶ Both texts argue that humans are social creatures by nature and therefore need rulership to avoid chaos and serve the common good.⁴⁷ However, *On Status and Government* focuses on the person and qualities of the ruler, rather than on the necessity of government. Citing Aristotle (probably a reference to the *Secretum secretorum*, believed in the Middle Ages to have been written by Aristotle for Alexander), the text claims that born rulers are intelligent, honorable, decisive and physically strong.⁴⁸ Therefore a ruler should first of all be ‘enlightened in true understanding’.⁴⁹

On Status and Government is meant to inform a ruler of his public functions, tasks, privileges and morals. Like most medieval mirrors of princes, the text attempts to educate the monarch to a virtuous way of life that prevents him from abusing his power and turning himself

⁴⁴ ‘Vain dem stade und regement die dij heren und voersten sullen hain’ (Staub – Sänger, *Deutsche und niederländische Handschriften* 127).

⁴⁵ On the genre of the mirror of princes, see the collected essays in Bejczy I.P. – Nederman C.J. (eds.), *Princely Virtue in the Middle Ages 1200–1500* (Turnhout: 2007), and Brinkhus G., *Eine bayrische Fürstenspiegelkomilation des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: 1978). Also worth consulting is Berges W., *Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters* (Leipzig: 1938).

⁴⁶ Ptolemy of Lucca, *On the Government of Rulers. De Regimine Principum*, trans. C.J. Blythe (Philadelphia: 1997), with sections of the text attributed to Thomas Aquinas. This is an English translation with the most up-to-date introduction, including a discussion of available editions of the Latin original (54).

⁴⁷ Ptolemy of Lucca, *On the Government of Rulers* 6.

⁴⁸ ‘Aristoteles saget dye von synnen verstandich synt und von seiden eerlich und von wercken guderhande und von gelyderen mechtich dye synt von naturen geboren ander lude heren zu syn’ (ms. Berleburg, fol. 401r). For the Latin text of a version of the *Secretum secretorum*, see Hiltgart von Hürtheim, *Mittelhochdeutsche Prosauübersetzung des Secretum Secretorum*, ed. R. Möller (Berlin: 1963); for the parallel discussed above, 28.

⁴⁹ ‘[...] erluchtet in wairhaftiger bekentenis’ (ms. Berleburg, fol. 401r).

into a tyrant. The moral and religious elements prevail in a list of rules to be observed by a monarch, that gives pride of place to his clerics – who embody both ecclesiastical and intellectual authority.⁵⁰ As a monarch must be true in his faith and fear God, he should always have an ordained religious person with him. He should honor and favour the clergy and consult them on God's laws and commandments. Moreover, a monarch must gather around him learned men with knowledge of the old books on medicine, law and theology – the medieval university faculties.⁵¹ Again, within the tradition of the *Fürstenspiegel* this is nothing new, and indeed most of the points listed can be found in the *Secretum secretorum*. However, looking at the set of rules within the context of the *Tafel*, we see Dirc van Delft emerging as a new Aristotle offering Albert the services of a learned friar.

The concern for the education of a monarch is taken a step further in the next chapter, in a similar *regement des lebens dye dye Hern und forsten sollen hain*, this time shaped explicitly after the letter by Aristotle addressed to Alexander the Great.⁵² This adaptation of the *Secretum secretorum* takes up the themes of the preceding chapter, although the pagan perspective of Aristotle and Alexander is sometimes adjusted to late medieval clerical views on a ruler's conduct and comfort. For instance, according to Aristotle it serves the well-being of the monarch to let him enjoy beautiful images ('schoen aengesijcht [...] von bilden'), but the author adds to this: 'Because I am a religious man in an order, I am not allowed to say that one should let the monarch see beautiful women, as they did with Alexander'.⁵³

⁵⁰ '[...] dye regulen und puncten dye den herrn und forsten zu hoeren' (ms. Berleburg, fol. 410r).

⁵¹ 'Der forest sal hain eynen warhaftighen fasten glauben und er sal synen got alleijzt foechten. Eyn forest sal hain eynen heyligen vader by hym des daz ampt hain sal daz gode zu hoert. Eyn forest sal eren und hoeghen geystliche lude und fragen von hyn dye ewe und was godes gebot ist. Eyn forest sal geleyrt lude by heme hain von kunsten der alder boecher von arzedyen, recht und theologen' (ms. Berleburg, fol. 410r-v). Cf. for the *Secretum secretorum* Hiltgart von Hürtheim, *Mittelhochdeutsche Prosäübersetzung* 32.

⁵² Although identified in Staub – Sänger, *Deutsche und niederländische Handschriften* 127, this text is not listed in the overview of Dutch and German adaptations of the text in Keil G., "Secretum secretorum", in Wachinger et alii (eds.), *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon*, vol. VIII (Berlin 1992) cols. 993–1013.

⁵³ '[...] want ich eyn geystlich man byn von orden so en darff ich nit saghen das man hyn sal lassen syen schoen frauwen glich als man Alexander dem keyser plaech zu doen' (ms. Berleburg, fol. 427r).

This is one of the very few occasions that we catch a glimpse of the author: a religious man in orders, who is deeply concerned with the moral edification of a monarch. The profile is very much that of the Dominican Dirc van Delft: theologian and confessor of the count of Holland.⁵⁴ Dirc's involvement is suggested further by a reference in the Aristotle chapter to the duties of craftsmen and rules of chivalry to be discussed later in the *Tafel*.⁵⁵ This points to the chapter on the coronation ceremonies of the emperor. Nor should it go unnoticed that *On Status and Government* refers to these ceremonies, in particular to the component that Dirc added to his sources: the notary who reads from a book how the newly crowned emperor should act and govern his country. As *On Status and Government* puts it:

We find in the Old Testament that God commanded the children of Israel thus: When the king sits on the throne of his kingdom, one will write for him God's law in a book and a priest will hold it before his eyes all the days of his life so that he will learn to fear his God and obey His commandments. The emperor is crowned in this way as well.⁵⁶

Except for the last comment on the crowning, the whole passage is a quotation from *Deuteronomy* 17:18–19, albeit the priest has become more important as the intermediary between God's law and the king.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ In the Rodemachern version, this chapter is preceded by an abridged version of the *Landrecht* (territorial law) and *Lehnrecht* (feudal law) contained in the *Sachsen-spiegel*. Originally written by Eike von Repgow in the thirteenth century, this book of law circulated in the Low Countries in a version that is associated with the Dutch court. It is this version that was used in the Rodemachern compilation. See on this adaptation of the *Saxon Mirror*, Wasserschleben H., "Mitteilungen über ein in dem Cod. Nr. 2667 der großherzogl(ichen) Hofbibliothek zu Darmstadt enthaltenes, für die Rechts- und Kunstgeschichte interessantes Werk", *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte*, Germanistische Abteilung 2 (1881) 131–151. On the Dutch manuscripts, Proské-van Heerdt D., "The Dirc van Delft-style: structure and chronology", in Horst K. van der – Klamt J.-C. (eds.), *Masters and miniatures: proceedings of the Congress on medieval manuscript illumination in the Northern Netherlands (Utrecht, 10–13 December 1989)* (Doornspijk: 1991) 245–254.

⁵⁵ 'Von den ritteren und von den buweluden sal ich hierna eyn grois capitell schreiben' (ms. Berleburg, fol. 430r).

⁵⁶ 'Dis vynden wir in dem alden testament das got geboit den kyndern von Ysrahel also: Als der konigk syet in den trone syns richs so sal man hym schreiben dye ee gotes in eyn boech und eyn prister sal is hym halden vor syn augen alle syne lebedaghe off das er lere synen got foechten und halden syn wort dye in de gotes geboden synt. Alsus so cronet man auch den keyser' (ms. Berleburg, fol. 402r).

⁵⁷ 'And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may

The passage above must have been inspired by *De regimine principum*, which uses the same *Deuteronomy* text to illustrate how ‘from divine law we know the way that leads to true beatitude and the things that are impediments to it, the teaching of which pertains to the office of priests’.⁵⁸

A similar passage is found in the Aristotle letter. A king’s wisdom best shows itself in the way he rules his kingdom according to divine law. This is why, when a king is crowned, he must be presented with the book of law and be told to fear God, observe his teachings and examine His commandments. This is not found in the *Secretum secretorum*, although the following lines are again taken from the pseudo-Aristotelian letter: ‘And therefore it befits a monarch to have with him wise, learned and religious men, to discuss [with them] difficult questions’.⁵⁹

Teaching the king by reading to him a book on the fear of God and His commandments provides a very meaningful parallel to the *Tafel* itself. In the prologue, starting with *Proverbs* 1:7 (‘The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom’), Dirc sets forth his intention of teaching Albert how to know God and his commandments in the same terms (‘to instruct and teach how you can learn to know your God and creator and love his commandments and keep and practice your faith’).⁶⁰ Throughout the text, both in its (original) Dutch form and the (extended) Rodemachern version, a network of references to books, philosophers and the instruction of kings has been laid out to emphasize the authority of the word. Classical and biblical exempla, theological manuals and mirrors of princes are put to use to turn the *Tafel* and its author into a fifteenth-century version of Secundus’ tablets.

learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes to do them’ (King James Bible).

⁵⁸ Cited after the translation in Ptolemy of Lucca, *On the Government of Rulers* 101.

⁵⁹ ‘Und umb disser sachen willen so sal man den konick als man hyn croenet das boech des rechtes in dye hant geben und aen sprechen das er got foecht und hyn lere bekennen und syn geboden undersuchen.Und darumb gezemet hyme wol daz er dye wysen und gelerten und geystliche manne by hym habe daer mit sprech und zwyfelfahtige fraghe vorbrenge’ (ms. Berleburg, fol. 419v). The text follows the *Secretum secretorum* (cf. Hildegard von Hürtheim, *Mittelhochdeutsche Prosauübersetzung* 32).

⁶⁰ ‘Up dat ich moghe wysen ende leren wo myde dat ir uwen gode und schepper kennen moghent und lieff habent syen ewe und gelaufe zu halden und och uch bas moghent hoeden, darumb so hain ich uwer genaden, uwer liefden und eren gemacht eyn boech genant dye tafel vain dem kristen gelaufe und leven’ (ms. Darmstadt fol. 1r, cited after *Dirc van Delfts Tafel*, vol. I 118).

Conclusion

Dirc van Delft wrote the *Tafel* for his patron Albert of Bavaria, although the scope of the treatise and the intellectual effort it evinces make it hard to imagine that this whole project was only a matter between the Dominican and the duke. The later transmission of the *Tafel* in the libraries of noble families, religious communities and beguine courts shows the larger potential of this treatise to serve as a theological manual for a wide audience.⁶¹ However, the (re)discovery of the Rodemachern version and its added focus on rulers and government change our perception of the text and its author's intentions or ambitions. With texts like the Secundus legend, *On Status and Government*, the letter by Aristotle and the adaptation of the *Ludus Scaccorum*, Dirc claimed a position as educator of the monarch. Presenting numerous models, exempla and images of rulers, philosophers and texts, he also claimed a new authority for (at least a part of) his book as a mirror of princes, both in the general terms of a literary genre and in the more specific meaning of a treatise for the court of Holland – within a literary culture of other writings that address rulers, law and government.

The chapter *On Status and Government* has an intriguing reference to a master *in libro de cura rei publice*, who may be identified as Philip of Leyden.⁶² This fourteenth-century canon and jurist wrote *De cura reipublice et sorte pincipantis* for William V, count of Holland, and produced a second version for Albert of Bavaria around 1355. The reference to *De cura* in the *Tafel* is one of the oldest traces of the text, of which there are no surviving manuscript copies. It is only known that there was a copy in the library of the court chapel in The Hague, the place Dirc must have frequented when he visited his patron.⁶³ The reference to *De cura* not only connects the (extended) *Tafel* to the Dutch court; it also makes the learned Dirc van Delft the successor to Philip of Leyden as the duke's philosopher. Philip of Leyden had been a man of letters like Dirc. As a solicitor to the counts of Holland

⁶¹ Van Oostrom, *Aanvaard dit werk* 152–170.

⁶² Ms. Berleburg, fol. 408v.

⁶³ On Philip, Leupen P., *Philip of Leyden, a Fourteenth Century Jurist. A Study of his Life and Treatise "De cura reipublice et sorte principantis"* (Zwolle: 1981).

in Avignon, the jurist was even more involved in the court life and may have educated Albert's sons.⁶⁴ Philip's work and interests show significant parallels to Dirc and his *Tafel*. It has been pointed out that Philip frequently cited the *Secretum secretorum* (which he believed to have been written by Aristotle for Alexander). He owned a copy of this text, as well as a copy of the *Ludus scaccorum*.⁶⁵ Vernacular versions of both texts appear in the (extended) version of the *Tafel*, as if the fourth treatise were meant to be read alongside Philip's *De cura*. This treatise might have come closer to a mirror of princes, but Dirc's vernacular work would have been more easily accessible than Philip's very technical legalistic Latin prose.

But the (extended) *Tafel* should not only be considered a follow-up to *De cura* almost half a century later. Closer in time to the *Tafel* are some texts that show a sudden interest in themes associated with the mirrors of princes. A certain Franconis, of whom we know nothing more than that he studied in Paris, produced his own adaptation in Dutch of the *Ludus Scacchorum*, dated 1403.⁶⁶ In 1407, Jan Mathijssen, town clerk of Den Briel, recorded the local legal customs in a book of law, consisting of five treatises full of exempla (partly taken from the *Ludus scaccorum*) and references to Aristotelian texts (including the *Secretum Secretorum*).⁶⁷

The textual culture of political and legal writing in Holland is the perfect context for the *Tafel*, as we find it in the Rodemachern manuscripts. Its authors were educated men of letters, sharing an interest

⁶⁴ As suggested in Boer D.E.H. de, "Positioning Princely Power. Dynastic Policy and the Instruments of Authority Used by the Counts of Holland, 1299–1433", in Gosman M. – Vanderjagt A. – Veenstra J. (eds.), *The Growth of Authority in the Medieval West. Selected Proceedings of the International Conference Groningen 6–9 November 1997* (Groningen: 1999) 22. De Boer's sketch of court education (19–22) offers insights on the extended version of the *Tafel* within the context of the court of Holland; De Boer further observes that contrary to what one might expect, no proper *Fürstenspiegel* seems to have circulated in Holland. The Rodemachern version of the *Tafel* should be seen to fill this lacuna.

⁶⁵ De Boer, "Positioning Princely Power" 21–22.

⁶⁶ Herwaarden J. van, "Dat Scaec spel: A Profane-Ethical Exploration", *Journal of Medieval History* 25 (1999) 309–337; for the possible connections to the court circle, see 315.

⁶⁷ Matthijssen Jan, *Het rechtsboek van den Briel beschreven in vijf tractaten*, ed. J.A. Fruin (The Hague: 1880).

in classical texts, the Latin world of learning, theology, law, politics and philosophy. With Secundus, they based their authority on that of the written word, and they shared the conviction that their books were worthy to be considered ‘a priceless jewel that is searched for by wise men’.

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PRODUCING TEXTS FOR PRINTS: ARTISTS, POETS, AND PUBLISHERS

Peter van der Coelen

Inscriptions can be found on prints since the earliest days of printmaking. The first century of printmaking saw a good deal of experimentation with format. Legends could be placed almost everywhere, in scrolls or cartouches, at the top or at the sides. It was only in the middle of the sixteenth century that these texts would be assigned to their ‘proper’ place, in the lower margins of the print. Pieter Bruegel’s series of Seven Virtues, engraved by Philips Galle and published by Hieronymus Cock in Antwerp around 1560, features this new format which became the standard.

One of the seven engravings [Fig. 1] represents *Fortitudo* (Fortitude). The virtue is recognisable from the anvil on her head, an indication that a strong person knows how to take a blow. A pillar symbolises the steadfastness with which we withstand evil, here depicted as a restrained dragon. The men and women around the personification conquer all sorts of vermin and the fortress in the distance also stands its ground. The print has a Latin caption that defines true fortitude as the ability ‘to conquer one’s impulses, to restrain anger and the other vices and emotions’.¹ In Bruegel’s preparatory drawing, now in the Print Room of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, this text has not been added yet [Fig. 2]. Obviously the artist knew what the general idea was, for he left the lower margin open. What is not clear, however, is whether Bruegel knew the precise text that would be added to the print, or if he had a role in the choice of the poet. We still know very little about the production of texts for prints in early modern Europe. In this contribution, Bruegel’s drawing will serve as the starting point for a short exploration of this issue. The focus will be on the question of who took the initiative for inscriptions on prints – artists, poets or publishers – and how this may have influenced the

¹ ANIMVM VINCERE, IRACVNDIAM COHIBERE, CAETERAQ[UE] VITIA ET,
AFFECTVS | COHIBERE, VERA FORTITVDO EST.

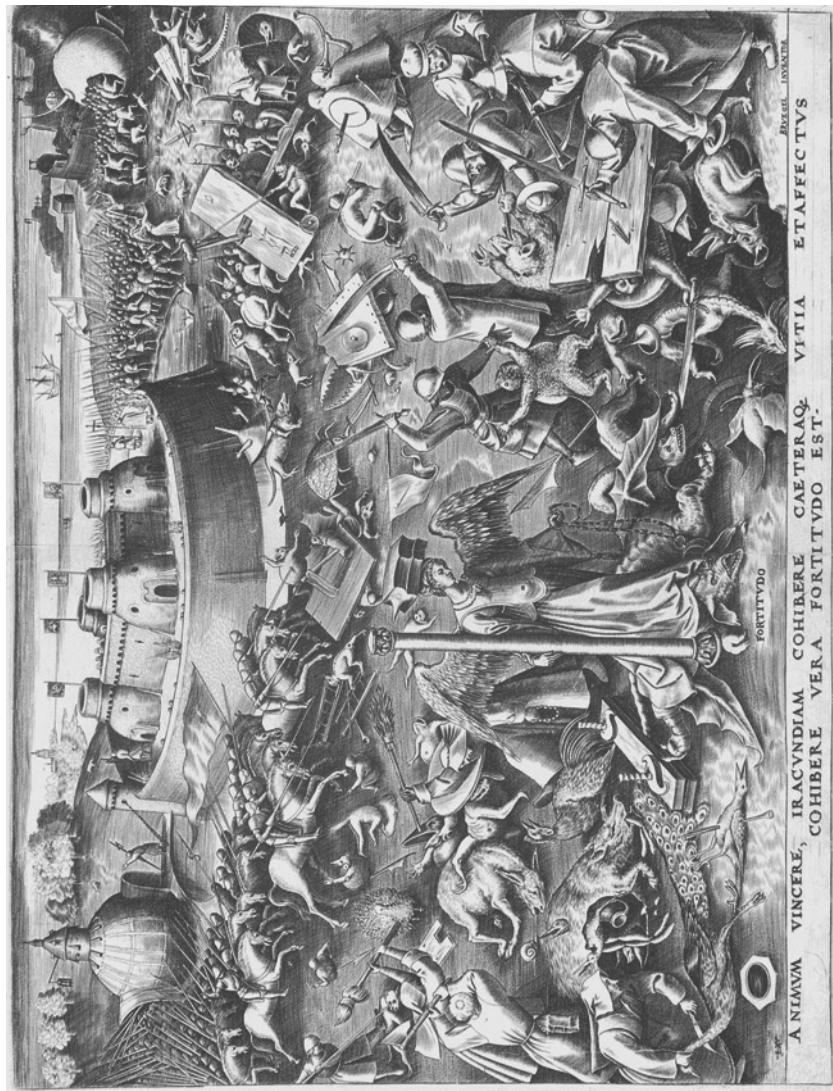


Fig. 1. Philips Galle after Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Fortitudo*, ca. 1560. Engraving, 223 × 287 mm.
Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.



Fig. 2. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Fortitudo*, 1560. Pen and brown ink, 225 × 295 mm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.

relationship between words and images. The concluding section offers some remarks on how these often neglected and misunderstood texts were appreciated in their own day.²

Prints and Picture Books

The verses inscribed on Bruegel's *Fortitudo*-print and the other sheets of his *Seven Virtues* series have been attributed to the Haarlem scholar and printmaker Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert.³ This attribution is tempting indeed, especially since Coornhert was well acquainted with the engraver of the prints, his fellow-townsman Philips Galle. Another possible candidate is the Haarlem scholar Hadrianus Junius, who composed many captions for prints designed by Maarten van Heemskerck.⁴ But even if we knew for certain who had written these verses, we probably would not have much more information about the circumstances under which they were produced. Were they commissioned by the artist himself or by his publisher, or did the poet have a leading role?

Unfortunately hardly any sources shed much light on the collaboration between printmakers, poets and publishers – at least not in the field of single sheet printmaking. We are better informed about the related field of book illustration. Some picture books from this period that employ both image and text, do reveal something of the relationships between artists, poets and publishers. Alciati's *Emblematum Liber*, published in Augsburg in 1531, is often seen as the starting

² For Bruegel's drawing cf. Orenstein N.M. (ed.), *Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Drawings and Prints*, [exh. cat., Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York] (New York: 2001) 188, nr. 74; Sellink M., *Bruegel. The Complete Paintings, Drawings and Prints* (Ghent: 2007) nr. 85. On the print, see Orenstein N.M., *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700: Pieter Bruegel the Elder* (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: 2006) nr. 18. The relationship between words and images has been treated in several studies: Raupp H.-J. (ed.), *Wort und Bild. Buchdruck und Druckgraphik in den Niederlanden im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* [exh. cat., Belgisches Haus, Cologne] (Cologne: 1981); Vekeman H. – Müller Hofstede J. (eds.), *Wort und Bild in der niederländischen Kunst und Literatur des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (Erfstadt: 1984); Ackermann Ph., *Textfunktion und Bild in Genreszenen der niederländischen Graphik des 17. Jahrhunderts* (Alfter: 1993). See also, Rosenfeld H., *Das deutsche Bildgedicht* (Leipzig: 1935).

³ Cf. Sellink M. in Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel* 192.

⁴ Veldman I.M., *Maarten van Heemskerck and Dutch Humanism in the Sixteenth Century* (Maarssen: 1977) 95–112.

point of this bimedial genre. In addition to emblem books there were many other types of books that used a similar format to present the Bible, Aesop's Fables, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, birds, fishes, flowers or even furniture.⁵ These books have something that is missing in single sheet printmaking, namely an introductory text. A case in point is the preface of *Imagination poetique* (1552), in which Barthélemy Aneau explains the genesis of his emblem book [Fig. 3].⁶ The poet describes how one day he had come across a set of woodblocks in the workshop of Macé Bonhomme. When he asked what the woodblocks were used for, the printer answered, 'A rien'. Apparently the prints were deemed useless because the printer had no verses to accompany them. Aneau immediately offered to supply Bonhomme with texts for these illustrations, promising him to make these 'mute and dead images' speak through 'living poetry'. This, according to Aneau, turned out to be a far more difficult task than he had thought, since instead of devising his own images, he had to write texts for existing illustrations. As Alison Saunders has demonstrated, Aneau's account is not very reliable. In the first place, his so-called discovery of the unused woodblocks was a fiction. A large part of the prints had already been used to illustrate Clément Marot's translation of the *Metamorphoses*, a fact of which he could hardly have been unaware. Even more misleading is Aneau's suggestion that a procedure in which the figures come first was exceptional. In fact, composing verses for existing prints, as he did in the *Imagination poetique*, was far from uncommon.⁷

The history of illustrated books offers many examples of publishers who commissioned poets to make texts for existing woodcuts. This was the procedure followed in 1569, when the Frankfurt publisher Sigmund Feyerabend compiled his *Thierbuch* with illustrations of all kinds of animals [Fig. 4]. The woodcuts, designed by Hans Bocksberger and Jost Amman, must have been completed when he asked Georg Schaller to compose the explanatory verses for them. In his preface, the poet defends his work against those critics who might find his verses insufficient to their task, arguing that he simply could

⁵ Saunders A., *The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book: A Decorative and Useful Genre* (Geneva: 1988) 44–45.

⁶ Aneau Barthélemy, *Imagination poetique* (Lyon, Macé Bonhomme: 1552) 6–7.

⁷ Saunders A., "The Influence of Ovid on a Sixteenth-Century Emblem Book: Barthelemy Aneau's 'Imagination poetique'", *Nottingham French Studies* 16 (1977) (1–18). Cf. Saunders, *Sixteenth-Century French Book* 67–69.

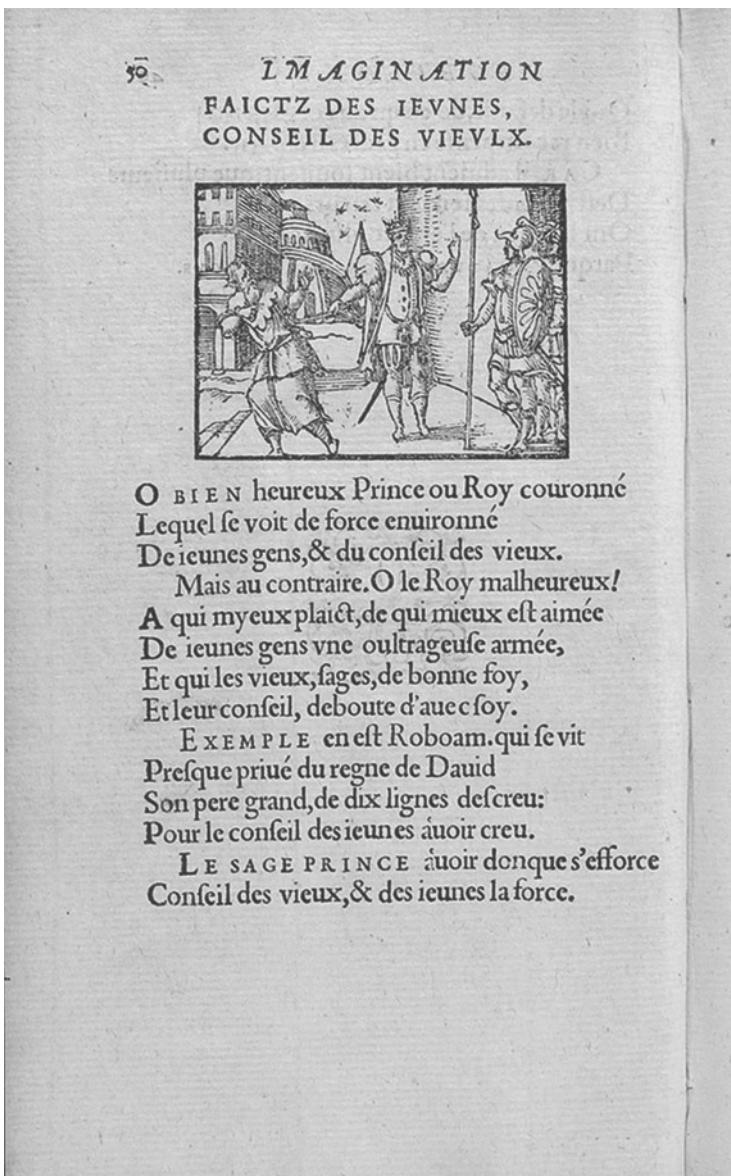


Fig. 3. Barthélemy Aneau, *Imagination poetique* (Lyon, Macé Bonhomme: 1552) 50. Glasgow, University Library.

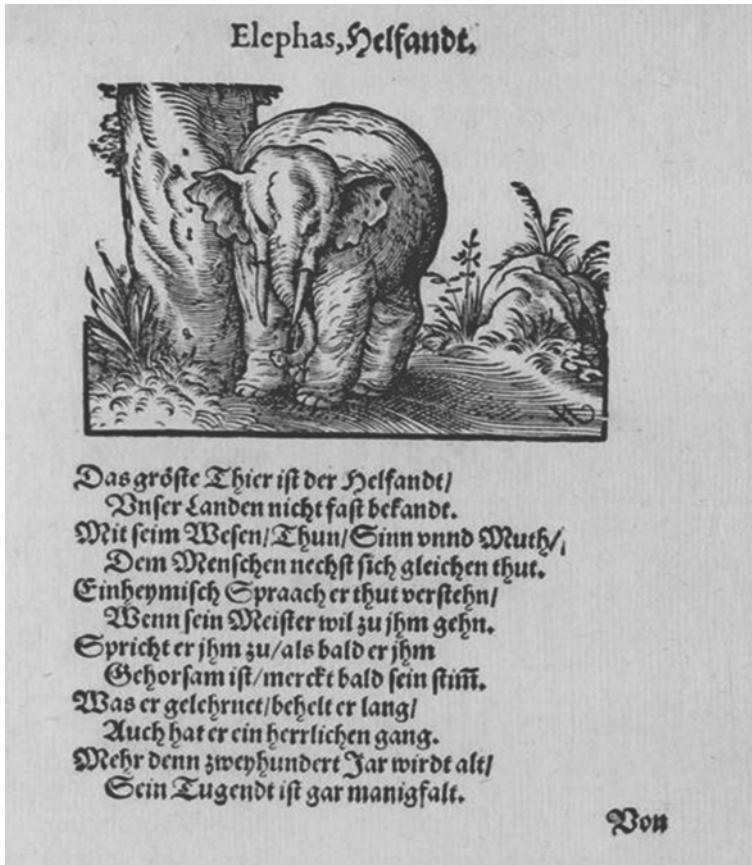


Fig. 4. Jost Amman, Hans Bocksberger and Georg Schaller, *Thierbuch* (Frankfurt am Main, heirs of Sigmund Feyerabend: 1592) fol. B4r. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek.

not have done better because of lack of time. Although this is a well-known literary convention, in this case there may have been some truth to Schaller's claim, given that he calls Feyerabend as a witness to the fact that he only had six days to write these texts. Since the book contains 108 illustrations, each with 12 lines of German verses, his task certainly would not have been easy; Schaller would have had to write an average of 216 lines every day.⁸ Without claiming the need to write as quickly as did Schaller, the Florentine poet Gabriello Simeoni nonetheless confirms in his autobiography that schedules were often tight when it came to producing texts for images. The Lyon publisher Guillaume Rouillé had asked him to compose octaves for a picture Bible with woodcuts by Pierre Eskrich. Simeoni relates that he started writing in the Spring of 1561. On 23 July he had finished the parts on Genesis and Exodus. In about four months he had written some 130 captions, that is approximately one per day.⁹

Apart from deadlines poets were also confronted with other restrictions by their publishers. The case of the Amsterdam print publisher Nicolaus Visscher and the poet Joannes Vollenhove is most elucidating in this respect. In 1689 Visscher planned a new edition of a picture Bible that had already been published by his father Nicolaes around 1652. The prints, copied after a series of 233 etchings by Matthaeus Merian the Elder, were to be accompanied by captions – quatrains and paraphrases – in five languages: Latin, French, English, German and Dutch. The greater part had been used in the earlier edition of the

⁸ *Ein neuw Thierbuch. Eigentliche vnd auch gründliche beschreibung allerley vier vnnd zweyfüssigen Thieren* (Frankfurt am Main, Hieronymus Feyerabend: 1569) fol. B3v: 'So sag ich in so kürtzer frist, / (Als sechs Tag des mein Zeug ist / Feyrabend) nit haben können mehr / Schreiben, als es wol wirdig wer'. For the *Thierbuch*, which was reprinted five times, cf. O'Dell-Franke I., "Die Nachwirkung von Dürers Tierdarstellungen auf Arbeiten Jost Ammans", *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 82–83 (1986–1987) 91–99.

⁹ Cf. Renucci T., *Un aventurier des lettres au XVI^e siècle, Gabriel Syméoni Florentin 1509–1570?* (Paris: 1943) 106, 193–197. A further indication of the timeframe for producing captions is found in the diary of the Hague schoolmaster and poet David Beck. On 14 August 1624 he records that he quickly composed four quatrains on the history of Tobias that afternoon. A painter he had befriended, Herman Breckerfelt, who needed these texts – not for a print but for a glass roundel – had asked for them that same morning: 'Ick wert des morgens ten 8 uijre aengesproken (op mijn Contoor) van Breckerfelt, begeerende van mij gedichte te hebben 4 Quatrains op de historie van Tobias, die hij in glas schreef voor suster Evas swager Willem Pieterss tot Rotterdam, dewelcke ick an den middag an een oorlapte'. Beck D., *Spiegel van mijn leven; een Haags dagboek uit 1624*, ed. S.E. Veldhuijzen (Hilversum: 1993) 151.

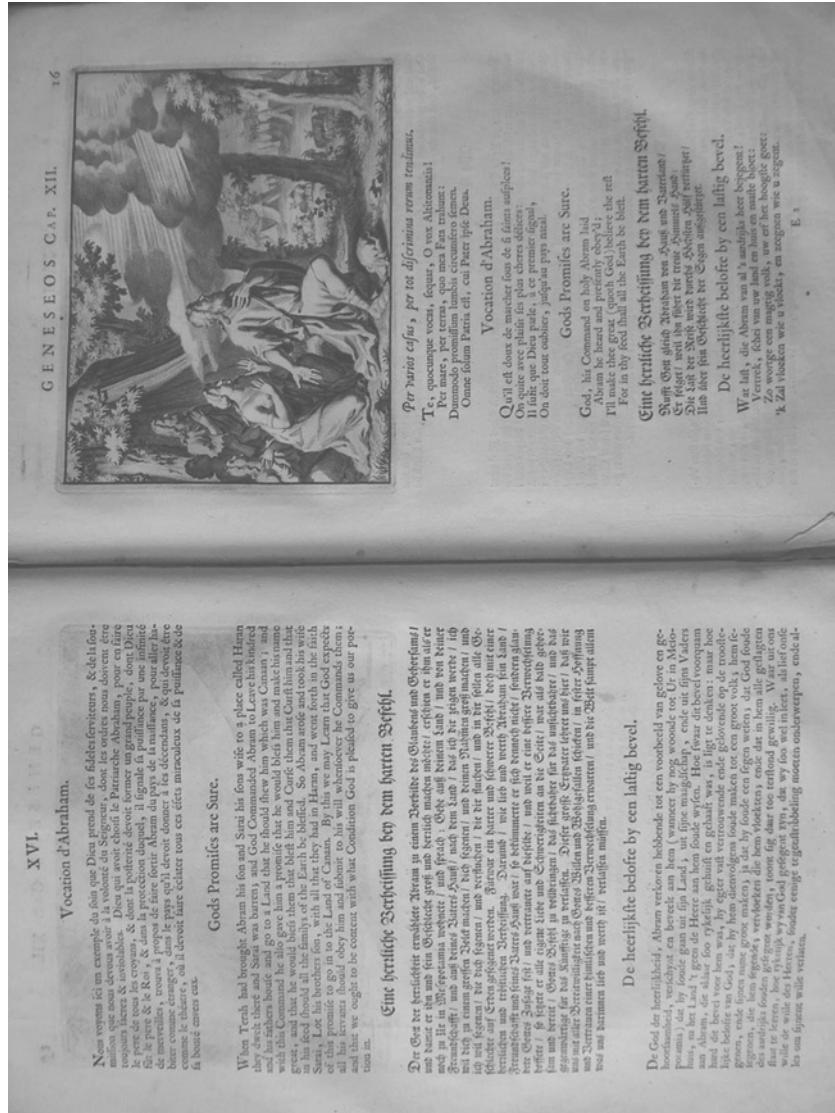
picture Bible, but since Visscher intended to enlarge his new version with fourteen prints he also needed new texts. For these he contacted Vollenhove, an eminent minister in the Hague who had gained a reputation as a poet. Visscher gave him detailed instructions for the captions in a letter. When Vollenhove indicated that he would prefer to write stanzas of six lines, the publisher insisted on quatrains, arguing that the extra verses would not fit in the available space. Later the length of Vollenhove's paraphrases turned out to be a problem for Visscher who wrote, 'As regards the captions and the motto's that you have sent me: they cannot be improved and deserve to be praised; and as regards the Paraphrases, they are of the same quality, the composition as well as the content; but because of the lack of space, they are a little too long. For not only is there a lot of text, your handwriting is also very small'.¹⁰ Vollenhove seems to have complied with Visscher's wishes again, so that the picture Bible could be published on time [Fig. 5].¹¹

In the case of picture books that were conceived by poets, such as the various works that Benito Arias Montano made in cooperation with Christophe Plantin and Philips Galle, the texts sometimes came first.¹² In general, however, it was the publisher who took the initiative for these books, commissioning the prints as well as the texts. In the field of single sheet prints the publisher must have had a similar rôle, especially after the professionalization of the printmaking process. Since the 1550s at least three persons were involved in the

¹⁰ 'Wat nu aangaan d'overgesonde Versjes en de Sinspreuken daarboven, de selve sijn onverbeterlijk en loffelijk; en wat belangen de Paraphrasen, de selve sijn van gedachten en stelling niet minder: maar na de bekrompe palen van onse Plaats, wat te groot van uijtbreijdinge, daar is niet alleen veel stoff, maar uw schrift is behalven dat seer klein, en niet wel mogelijk om het geheel in onse kleene plaats te kunnen brennen'. Nicolaus Visscher to Joannes Vollenhove, 12 April 1689 (Amsterdam, University Library, H.63.c.). With thanks to Geert Dibbets. For the collaboration between Visscher and Vollenhove, cf. Dibbets G.R.W., *Joannes Vollenhove (1631–1708) dominee-dichter. Een biografie* (Hilversum: 2007) 256–258.

¹¹ *Afbeeldingen Der voornaamste Historien, Soo van het Oude als Nieuwe Testament* (Amsterdam, Nicolaus Visscher: 1689). See for this picture Bible: Coelen P. van der, *De Schrift verbeeld. Oudtestamentische prenten uit renaissance en barok* (Nijmegen: 1998) 171.

¹² Hänsel S., *Der spanische Humanist Benito Arias Montano (1527–1598) und die Kunst* (Münster: 1991) 68–127. Cf. Clifton J. – Melion W.S. (ed.), *Scripture for the Eyes. Bible Illustration in Netherlandish Prints of the Sixteenth Century* [exh. cat., Museum of Biblical Art, New York; the Michael C. Carlos Museum, Atlanta] (London-New York: 2009) 65–75; 147–150.



er voorraamste Historien, Soo van het Oude als Nieuwe Testament (Amsterdam, Nicolaus Visscher: [1689]) fol. 15v-16r. Private collection.

production of a print, each with his own task. Artists drew the designs, which were engraved by specialized engravers, while publishers took care of printing and distribution. From then on poets also became involved, since captions had become a standard component of prints. In Northern Europe Hieronymus Cock, Bruegel's publisher, was the key figure in this professionalization process.¹³ A closer look at Bruegel's drawing of *Fortitudo* [Fig. 2] reveals that it must have been Cock who commissioned the texts, not Bruegel. The artist did not leave the lower margin completely blank, but wrote two lines of fantasy letters or symbols. This suggests that at that time he did not know the precise text that would later be added to the print.¹⁴ The other designs for the series of *Virtues*, e.g. the one for *Caritas* [Fig. 6], do have texts in the lower margins. These inscriptions were written by another hand, however, in a shade of ink different from that used in the drawing. The only texts that Bruegel inscribed himself are his signature and the names of the personifications. The artist confined himself to the field of the image itself, while the lower margins obviously were someone else's domain.¹⁵

Apart from the *Virtues* there are several other drawings by Bruegel that have lower margins reserved for captions, with or without texts in another hand. In this respect these drawings are rather exceptional, since the designs for prints by other artists that have been preserved, generally have no lower margins at all.¹⁶ Obviously, caption texts were not sent to the designer but given directly to the engraver. In the case of Bruegel's *Virtues* this is even more likely, since Philips Galle had been a pupil of the presumed author of the verses, Dirck Volkertszoon

¹³ Riggs T.A., *Hieronymus Cock. Printmaker and Publisher* (New York – London: 1977).

¹⁴ Renger K., "Verhältnis von Text und Bild in der Graphik (Beobachtungen zu Missverhältnissen)", in: Vekeman – Müller Hofstede, *Wort und Bild* 151–161 (esp. 152). For the inscriptions on Bruegel's prints, see Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel* 44, 49–50, 54.

¹⁵ Drawings by Bruegel 'with some captions on them' (met eenige schriften by) are mentioned by Karel van Mander in his *Schilder-Boeck* (Haarlem, Paschier van Wesbusch: 1604) fol. 233v. Cf. Orenstein, *Pieter Bruegel* 9.

¹⁶ In Huigen Leeflang's selection from the Leiden Print Room there are only two drawings for prints with texts in the margin. See Leeflang H., "Van ontwerp naar prent. Tekeningen voor prenten van Nederlandse meesters (1550–1700) uit de collectie van het Prentenkabinet van de Universiteit Leiden", *Delineavit et Sculpsit* 27 (2003) 2–108 (nrs. 2a, 14a). For the many drawings by Maerten van Heemskerck that have been preserved, see Garff J., *Tegninger af Maerten van Heemskerck* (Copenhagen: 1971).

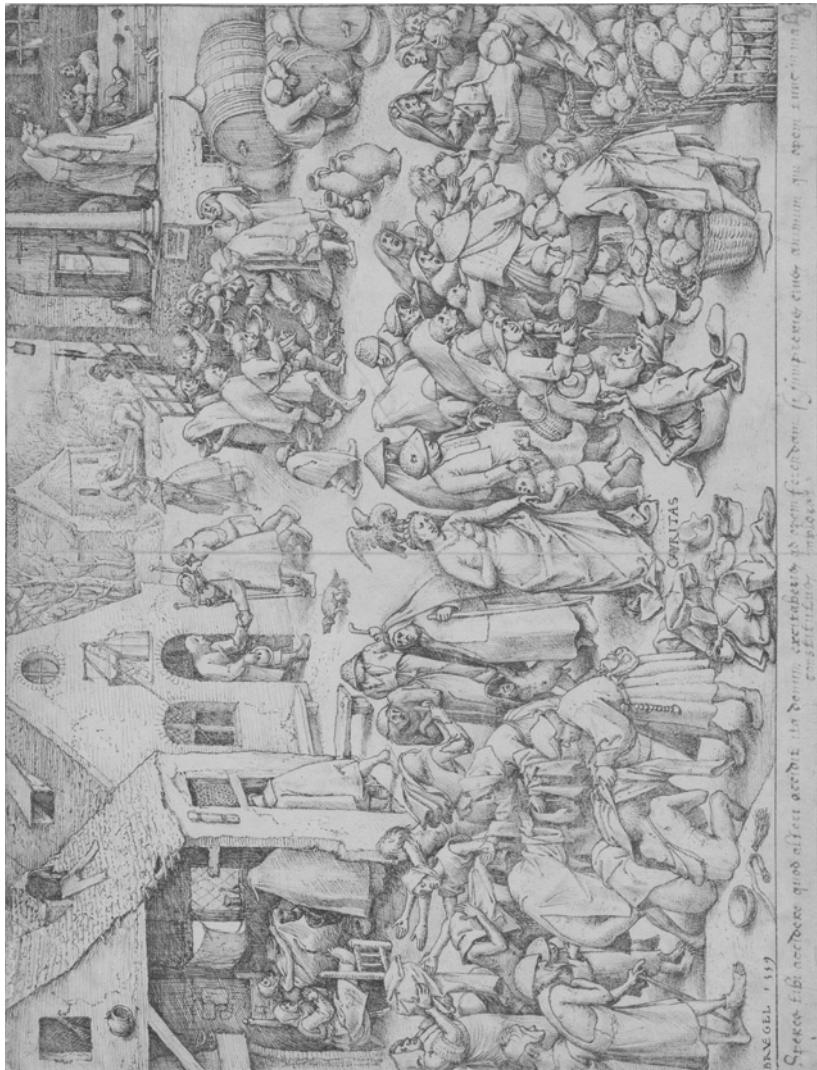


Fig. 6. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *Caritas*, 1559. Pen and dark brown ink, 224 x 299 mm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.

Coornhert. Other poets and engravers would have had equally easy access to one other, since collaborators often lived in the same town. It is no coincidence that Cornelis Schonaeus, long-time rector of the Haarlem Latin school, became the foremost author of texts for engravings from the school of Hendrick Goltzius.¹⁷ But even if they lived somewhat further apart, engravers and poets could easily communicate. The Leiden poet and historian Petrus Scriverius served several Haarlem printmakers in this way. In 1626 and 1627 he composed captions for a couple of engravings by Theodor Matham. In an undated letter the engraver asked the scholar to provide more details about the text for yet another print. It seems that he was only interested in technical matters, such as the way the text should be engraved around the image, and whether every sentence should start with a capital letter. Apparently the content of the caption was of no particular concern to him.¹⁸

Words and images

The question remains then to what extent poets, for their part, cared about the images for which they were providing texts. As we have seen, Bruegel probably learned of the precise texts used as captions for his prints only after their publication. In the case of *Fortitudo* he may have concluded that the text fit the tenor of the image: ‘Animum vincere, iracundiam cohibere caeteraque vitia et affectus cohibere vera fortitudo est’ (“To conquer one’s impulses, to restrain anger and the other vices and emotions: this is true fortitude”). Although the caption goes well with the picture, the poet did not necessarily need to have studied the print closely to supply it. In early modern printmaking, captions usually do not offer exact descriptions of the prints they accompany. During his stay in Cologne, Crispijn de Passe worked with

¹⁷ McGee J., *Cornelis Corneliszoon van Haarlem (1562–1638). Patrons, Friends and Dutch Humanists* (Nieuwkoop: 1991) 297.

¹⁸ Letter from Theodor Matham to Petrus Scriverius, undated (Royal Library, The Hague, ms. 131 B 33, fol. 125v). Cf. De Jongh E. – Luijten G., *Spiegel van alledag. Nederlandse genrepretenen 1550–1700*, [exh. cat., Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam] (Amsterdam – Ghent: 1997) 202. With thanks to Michiel Roscam Abbing, who together with Pierre Tuynman is preparing a publication on Scriverius: *Petrus Scriverius Harlemonensis (1576–1660). A Key to the Correspondence, Contacts and Works of an independent Humanist* (forthcoming).

several Neo-Latinist poets, but there seems to have been no need for a close collaboration.¹⁹ Poets enjoyed great freedom to comment on the subject of the print in their own way. In his preface of the *Imagination poetique*, Aneau explicitly refers to this artistic freedom. When composing his verses, he says he did not try to reconstruct the original intention of the artist who made the woodcuts; on the contrary, his aim was to use his own imagination: ‘je ne me suis point tant soucié que pourroit avoir imaginé celluy quiconque en feit le desseing [...]: que d'y approprier de mon invention ce que me a semblé le plus convenable’.²⁰

Aneau’s remarks remind us of the fact that inscriptions on prints cannot be regarded as evidence of the artistic intention of the designer. As Elizabeth McGrath brilliantly demonstrated, instead of explaining the meaning of a picture the purpose of inscriptions was often quite the opposite; they might, for example, serve to add something not actually illustrated or to make a literary complement to a pictorial invention. Rather than discussing the image, poets were concerned to produce their own version of the subject.²¹ One of the examples discussed by McGrath is *The Banishment of Hagar*, engraved in 1603 by Jacob Matham after a drawing by Abraham Bloemaert [Fig. 7].²² It depicts the moment in which Abraham, persuaded by his wife Sarah, banishes Hagar and her son Ishmael to the wilderness (Genesis 21). In the margin below the scene a Latin text by the Haarlem poet Simon Sovius paraphrases Rupert von Deutz’s allegory on the expulsion of Hagar. ‘As long as the Jews treat Christ and the Christians badly, they will undergo the same punishment’, his caption reads. Like the medieval theologian, Sovius interpreted the expulsion of Hagar as a foreshadowing of the Diaspora. This interpretation played no role in the artistic conception of the print for it seems impossible that Bloemaert intended the touching figure of Hagar as an embodiment of Judaism. Bloemaert did not even contrast Hagar, as the Old Testament, and

¹⁹ Veldman I.M., *Crispijn de Passe and his Progeny (1564–1670). A Century of Print Production* (Rotterdam: 2001) 57.

²⁰ Aneau, *Imagination poetique* 7.

²¹ McGrath E., “Rubens’s ‘Susanna and the Elders’ and moralizing inscriptions on prints”, in: Vekeman – Müller Hofstede, *Wort und Bild* 73–90, esp. 74.

²² Widerkehr L., *The New Hollstein Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700: Jacob Matham* (Ouderkerk aan den IJssel: 2007) nr. 2. See for the theme: Coelen P. van der, “Het Oude Testament in prent. Voorstellingen van de Verstoting van Hagar en Ismaël”, *Antiek* 31 (1996–1997) 274–282.



Fig. 7. Jacob Matham after Abraham Bloemaert, *The Banishment of Hagar*, 1603. Engraving, 466 × 358 mm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.

Sarah, as the New Testament, as many artists before him had done. It is in fact questionable whether he depicted Sarah at all. The woman in the window seems too young to be her. Bloemaert's choice of subject matter was clearly influenced by the possibility of placing his Old Testament protagonists in a landscape setting, and thus being able to display his virtuosity and imaginative powers. He devoted particular attention to the depiction of the imposing farmhouse and the numerous rustic motifs. As McGrath explains, Sovius would not have considered his interpretation as the 'deeper' meaning in the picture: 'The text would rather appear to point out that the episode shown by Bloemaert with such diverting rustic charm could, after all, be taken as a serious theological lesson; the implication is not that the artist had considered this message, but that to all appearances he had not'.²³

In general, artists and poets did not collaborate very closely. They had their own aims and ambitions. This often resulted in complex relationships between image and text. But even when artists were responsible themselves for the choice of the captions, their function may not have been to simply explain what could be seen. For this reason the meaning of the etching by Adriaen van Ostade traditionally known as *The Breakfast*, has long been misunderstood [Fig. 8]. Since the Haarlem artist kept control over the plates of the fifty etchings he made, he must have been responsible for the Latin text that was added to this print: 'Securae reddamus tempora mensae / venit post multos una serena dies' ('Let us make time for a meal free from care, after many a day comes weather fair'). According to several interpreters this text is a reference to the modest enjoyment of the meal by the company of peasants depicted.²⁴ The question is, however, whether this learned caption – an out-of-context quotation from the Roman poet Tibullus – might not have been meant to make fun of the peasants. In this instance, as often was the case with print captions, the relation between the text and illustration is not self-evident. For what we see is not a family enjoying their breakfast but rather a drinking bout in a tavern in which even children seem to take part.

²³ McGrath, "Rubens" 78.

²⁴ Schnackenburg B., "Das Bild des bäuerlichen Lebens bei Adriaen van Ostade", in: Vekeman – Müller Hofstede, *Wort und Bild* 30–42, esp. 35 and 37. Cf. *Everyday Life in Holland's Golden Age. The Complete Etchings of Adriaen van Ostade*, [exh. cat., Museum Het Rembrandthuis, Amsterdam] (Amsterdam: 1998) 21–22.

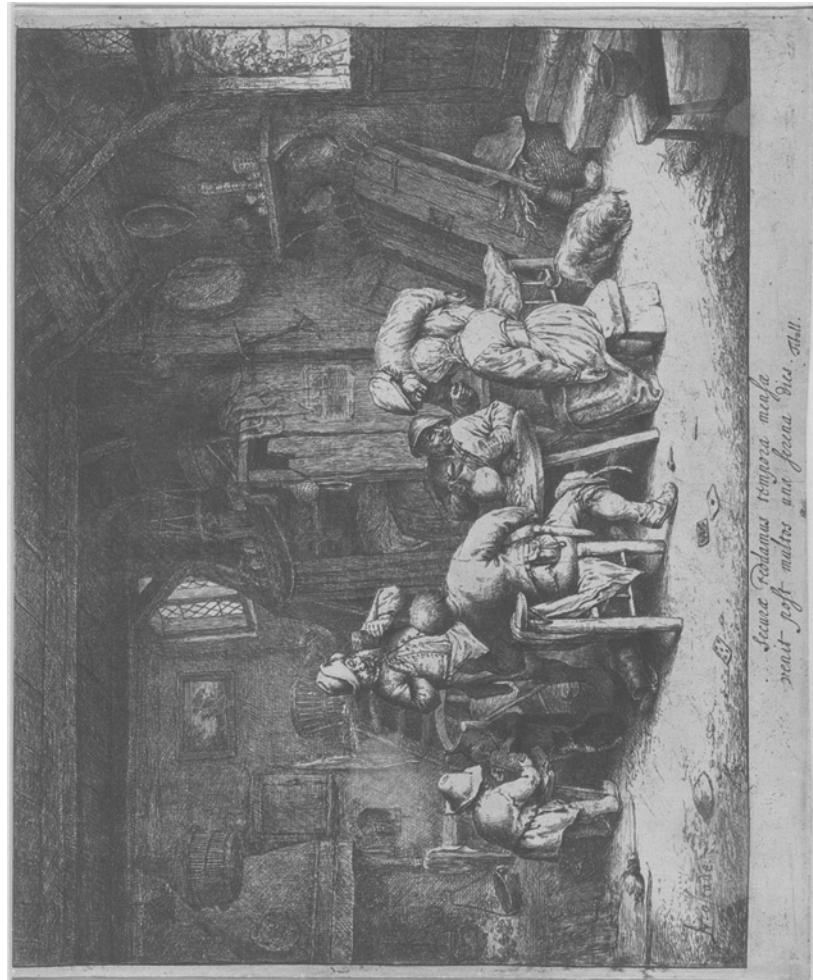


Fig. 8. Adriaen van Ostade, 'The Breakfast', ca. 1647–1652. Etching and drypoint, 218 × 262 mm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

Appreciation and neglect

Van Ostade's so-called *Breakfast* is exceptional in his oeuvre, since it is his only etching with a text. Like Rembrandt and other *peintre-graveurs* of his time, Van Ostade usually produced prints without captions. Reproductive prints, however, would continue to use captions for centuries to come. What had become standardised in the days of Bruegel and Cock would remain a common feature of reproductive engraving throughout the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth century. Print publishers therefore must have attached great value to these texts, and many viewers must have read and appreciated them no less.

In Netherlandish printmaking the decades around 1600 were a heyday for inscriptions on prints. While the texts on Bruegel's engravings had remained anonymous, the Latin legends on the prints from the Goltzius circle often contain the name or initials of their authors. It seems likely that the poets took some pride in their accomplishments, even though their work had been made on command. Thus their names were associated with the famous Haarlem school, whose engravings were sought after throughout Europe.²⁵ By the same token, by mentioning the names of poets, print publishers could make these engravings even more attractive for collectors. Jacques de Gheyn II, a printmaker associated with the Goltzius circle, also published prints with Latin poems. During his Leiden years, between 1595 and 1600, he had a very special collaborator: the young Hugo de Groot (Grotius), who had just enrolled as a student at Leiden University. The Latin captions composed for De Gheyn's engravings are his first texts to appear in print. By inscribing the age of this child prodigy on his prints (*aetatis XII*) De Gheyn undoubtedly intended to appeal to the curiosity of his audience [Fig. 9].²⁶

According to the literary theory of the time, images could not do without texts.²⁷ Aneau's claim that his printer's woodcuts only came to life by adding suitable inscriptions, can be found in numerous

²⁵ McGee, *Cornelis Corneliszoon* 297.

²⁶ Filedt Kok J.P., "Jacques de Gheyn II. Engraver, Designer and Publisher", *Print Quarterly* 7 (1990) 248–281; 370–396; esp. 269–270.

²⁷ Cf. Hoogvliet M., "Mixing Text and Image. French and Italian Theories from the Late Middle Ages to the Early Sixteenth Century", in: *Multi-Media Compositions from the Middle Ages to the Early Modern Period* (Leuven – Paris – Dudley: 2004) 75–103.



Fig. 9. Jacques de Gheyn II, *Vanitas*, 1595–1596. Engraving, 276 × 184 mm.
Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.

variants. In this vein the English poet George Wither classified the engravings of Crispijn de Passe as ‘dumbe Figures’ that could be made much more worthy by adding ‘the life of Speach’ unto them. The prints that Wither was referring to, had been published by De Passe in 1611 and 1613 as part of Gabriel Rollenhagen’s *Emblemata*. The images were originally accompanied by two lines of text, but as Wither states, ‘the Verses were so meane, that, they were afterward cut off from the Plates’.²⁸ Since without any text the images would be worthless, Wither replaced the old verses with his own ‘Illustrations’ – stanzas consisting of no less than 30 lines each.

Wither was certainly not alone in reading the texts on prints critically, but few people left similar written commentaries. Nevertheless, they sometimes left traces that show something of their appreciation. Corrected misspellings on individual impressions reveal a certain interest of previous owners, as do handwritten translations that occasionally have been added to Latin captions. Effaced words, phrases or sentences indicate disagreement with the content of the text. The most radical usage, the complete excision of the text, is also the most common. It may be a sign of genuine dissatisfaction, similar to the treatment of De Passe’s copperplates. However, the many impressions of prints with missing captions that can be found today in museums and private collections, are in the first place the result of the way they were kept in the past. Much of what has survived was once put safely away in albums and portfolios by collectors. Most of these albums have been dismantled long ago, but some have been kept more or less unaltered. Among the preserved albums are those of Michel de Marolles, the greatest print collector of his day, whose collection was sold in 1667 to Louis XIV.²⁹ In composing these albums, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the need for visual harmony or the simple lack of space often made it necessary to cut the prints. As a result several impressions lost their margins or their captions [Fig. 10]. When prints were hung on the wall, as a significant proportion of the production was meant to be, they often got a similar treatment. A number of seventeenth-century Dutch paintings show how prints were used to

²⁸ George Wither, *A collection of emblemes* (London, Henry Taunton: 1635) fol. A1v–A2r. Cf. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe* 196–197.

²⁹ See for the collection of Marolles: Brakensiek S., *Vom ‘Theatrum mundi’ zum ‘Cabinet des Estampes’*. Das Sammeln von Druckgraphik in Deutschland 1565–1821 (Hildesheim: 2003). Cf. De Jongh-Luijten, *Spiegel van alledag* 23–24.

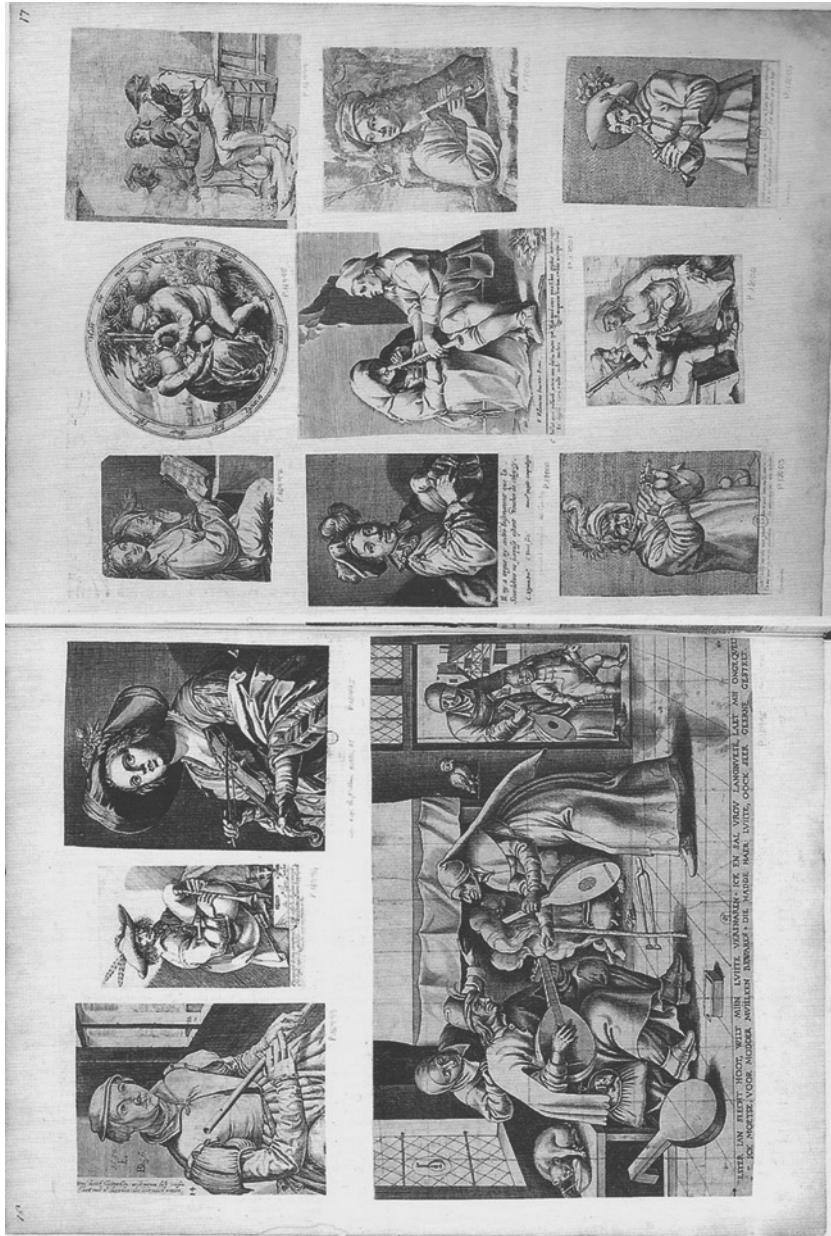


Fig. 10. *Recueil de pieces facétieuses et bouffonnes* 16–17, from the collection of Michel de Marolles. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

decorate the interiors of homes and taverns. Jacob Duck's scene of a sleeping soldier, for instance, has a large print on the back wall, depicting Esau selling his birthright to Jacob [Fig. 11]. Preserved impressions show that this print originally had a caption [Fig. 12] which is missing from the version depicted in the painting.³⁰ Many prints must have lost their text margins when they were framed or fastened to rods. In spite of the efforts of poets and publishers, not every viewer or collector cared much for these literary embellishments. Captions may have made prints more attractive for some, but ultimately it was the images themselves that remained the real reason for acquiring them.

³⁰ Waals J. van der, *Prenten in de Gouden Eeuw: van kunst tot kastpapier* [exhibition catalogue, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen] (Rotterdam: 2006) 19. Cf. Coelen P. van der, "Prints on the Wall – Images as Artefacts", website ALMA (<http://alma.boijmans.nl/en/showcase/Printsonthewallimagesasartefacts>).

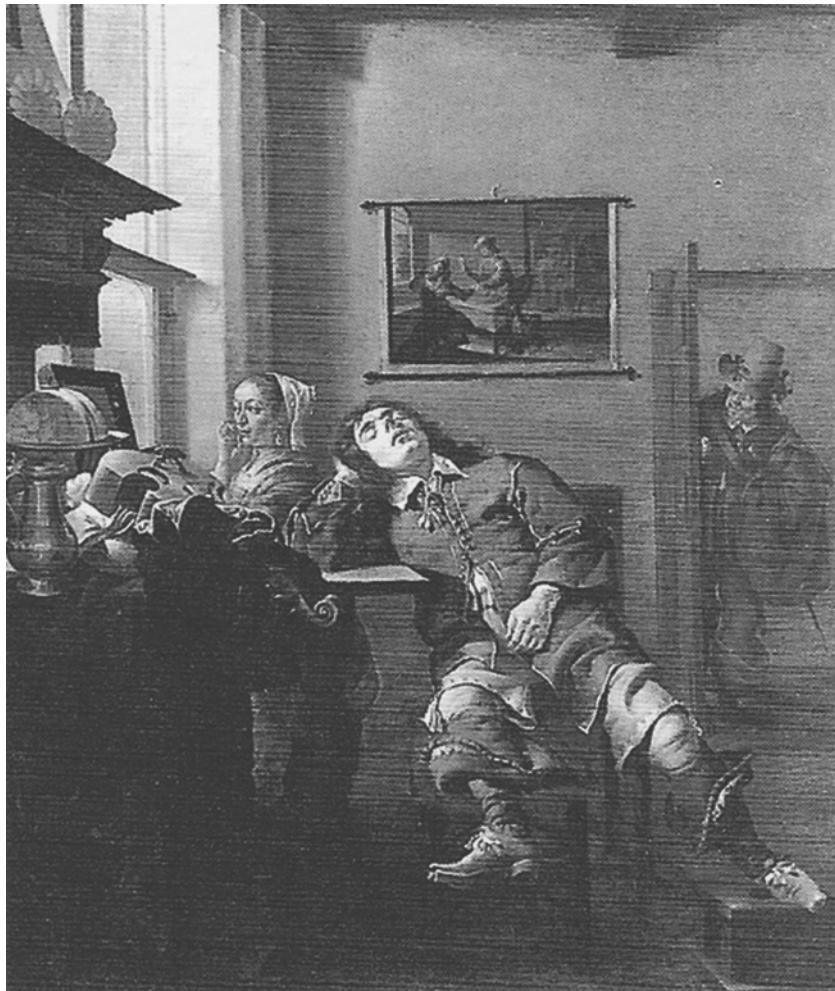


Fig. 11. Jacob Duck, *The Sleeping Soldier*, ca. 1640–1650. Oil on panel, 42.5 × 37 cm. Dijon, Musée des Beaux-Arts.



Fig. 12. Anonymous, published by Claes Jansz Visscher, *Esau Selling his Birthright to Jacob*, ca. 1630–1650. Engraving, 410 × 518 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

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EMBODYING HERMENEUTICS: RABELAIS AND THE PYTHAGOREAN SYMBOLA

Anita Traninger

In the preface to his novel *Gargantua*, François Rabelais (ca. 1494–1553), under the guise of Alcofrybas Nasier, famously compares his book to ‘symboles Pythagoricques’ in order to claim that a ‘plus hault sens’ is at work in the novels about two generations of Giants and their carnivalesque adventures. I will argue that the Pythagorean *symbola* are not a general concept, but a set of texts that imply a certain type of hermeneutics, and that there is one episode in the *Pantagruel* that deals with this in particular, namely the story of the English cleric Thaumaste who engages in a disputation in signs with Pantagruel’s companion Panurge.¹

The plot of the episode is easily summarised: A scholar from England, Thaumaste, travels to Paris to challenge Pantagruel in disputation. He has been attracted by Pantagruel’s fame, who had made his name as a fierce combatant in an extended series of disputations against the Paris doctors of theology. In a preparatory meeting, Thaumaste proposes to deal with issues – ‘aulcuns passages de Philosophie, de Geomantie, et de Caballe’² – so difficult that a debate in signs seems advisable. While Pantagruel agrees at first, the proposed mode turns out to be beyond his capability. After an exasperating study of a series of texts on signs and signification, he is relieved to learn that Panurge, his street-wise

¹ *Gargantua* and *Pantagruel* are the first and the second novel in his five book cycle on the lives, heroic deeds and sayings of the giant Gargantua and his son Pantagruel, published between 1532 and (posthumously) 1564. I quote the French original from Rabelais F., *Œuvres complètes*, ed. M. Huchon (Paris: 1998) and the English translations from *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, ed. – trans. M.A. Screech (London: 2006). I am concerned with Pantagruel, ch. XVIII ('Comment un grand clerc de Angleterre vouloit arguer contre Pantagruel, et fut vaincu par Panurge') and ch. XIX ('Comment Panurge feist quinaud l'Angloys, qui arguoit par signe'), in the chapter numbering of the 1542 edition. Most of the debate was inserted only in the (reworked, enlarged and partly expurgated) edition of 1542, and only with these additions, as M.A. Screech has remarked, does 'the comedy [shift] to the theme of the revealed wisdom of the mythical Hermes Trismegistus', *Gargantua and Pantagruel* 103.

² Rabelais, *Œuvres complètes* 282.

and crafty companion, is willing to step up and act as his disciple, effectively taking on the task of acting as Thaumaste's opponent, while Pantagruel chairs the debate. The disputation takes place in the Great Hall of the collège de Navarre, together with the Sorbonne one of the great theological colleges, in front of an audience representing all status groups and dignitaries of the university. Panurge, who had shunned preparation for the event, drinking and gambling all night instead, shows up in a ridiculous get-up, most conspicuously having attached a bunch of silk scarves to his codpiece. Yet against all odds, he seems to be doing quite well. The assembled theologians are described as contemplating and discussing the meaning of the gestures which are signalled by the two opponents. Even what clearly resembles mocking and indeed obscene gestures is taken in by the audience with rapturous interest. Only when Thaumaste experiences major bowel movement do the onlookers start to complain. Panurge, however, answers with further gestures, even grabbing his private parts. After a few more exchanges of this kind, the visiting scholar declares himself defeated.

The episode has received intense critical attention. Rabelais' critics largely agree that the chapter is a satire of the Sorbonne and of scholasticism in general as well as of occult traditions.³ The vulgar gestures which are prevalent in the course of the disputation – including the 'victorious' gesture, the grimace still in use today with bared teeth, the corners of the mouth pulled upward and the corners of the eyes pulled downward, in the face of which Panurge is declared the winner over Thaumaste⁴ – are generally seen as a crude and straightforward

³ See above all Screech M.A., "The meaning of Thaumaste (A double-edged satire of the Sorbonne and of the *prisca theologia* of cabbalistic Humanists)", in Screech M.A., *Some Renaissance Studies. Selected articles 1951–1991 with a Bibliography*, ed. M.J. Heath (Geneva: 1992) 111–121; while Screech claims that the satire pertains both to scholasticism and occult traditions, he detects a 'marked sympathy' for the latter, see p. 117. Cf. further Defaux G. *Pantagruel et les sophistes. Contribution à l'histoire de l'Humanisme Chrétien au XVI^e siècle* (The Hague: 1973); Krailsheimer A.J., *Rabelais and the Franciscans* (Oxford: 1963) esp. 209–219; Parkin J., "Comic Modality in Rabelais: Baisecul, Humevesne, Thaumaste", *Etudes rabelaisiennes* 18 (1985) 57–82. For a survey of interpretations of the episode see De Looze L., "To Understand Perfectly Is to Misunderstand Completely: "The Debate in Signs" in France, Iceland, Italy and Spain", *Comparative Literature* 50 (1998) 136–154, here 150–1.

⁴ Rabelais, *Oeuvres complètes* 289–90: 'Dont Panurge mist les deux maistres doigtz à chascun cousté de la bouche le retirant tant qu'il pouvoit et monstrant toutes ses dentz: et des deux poulses rabaissoit les paupières des yeulx bien parfondement en faisant assez layde grimace selon que sembloit es assistans. [...] Adoncques se leva Thaumaste et ostant son bonnet de la teste, remercia ledict Panurge doulement'.

mockery of an academic world supposedly deemed to be obsolete by Rabelais.

In what follows, I will be concerned with the apparently transparent ‘obscene’ elements of the disputation, which have been attributed to a ‘grotesque realism’ and to date have never warranted further analysis. Beyond the signalling of mockery and scorn, signification is held to reach its limits where hand signs are met with raw acts of defecation and phallic exhibitionism. In a view that is certainly dependent on Mikhail Bakhtin’s classical analysis and his focus on the subversiveness of the physical, the grotesque body figures as a connotative sign of carnival.⁵ In what I plan to do, this perspective is of course not to be negated, but rather to be augmented by aspects of a humanist culture of wit that merge easily with the rather robust and popular elements of the story.⁶

The episode is built around a secret as neither the narrator nor the characters reveal which *quaestio* is actually debated or which problems are at stake. The gestures exchanged by the two adversaries are represented meticulously in their chronological order, resulting in a series of signs which are partly evocative of codified sign systems such as Bede’s finger computation or the sign language which was widespread among monks subject to oaths of silence. Other signs can clearly be identified as mocking gestures, and still others seem to be insignificant.⁷ Let us first take a closer look at how the gestures are described:

The Englishman now made this sign: he raised his left hand high in the air wide open; he then closed the four fingers into a fist and placed his extended thumb on the bridge of his nose. Immediately afterwards he raised his right hand, wide open, and wide open lowered it, placing the

⁵ See Bakhtin M., *Rabelais and His World*, trans. H. Iswolsky (Cambridge, MA – London: 1968) 317. Bakhtin attributes ‘the essential role [...] to those parts of the grotesque body in which it outgrows its own self, transgressing its own body, in which it conceives a new, second body: the bowels and the phallus’.

⁶ Altogether, the story is of course ‘highly crafted’, as Stephen Greenblatt observes in “Filthy Rites”, in idem, *Learning to Curse. Essays in Early Modern Culture* (New York – London: 1990) 67. This observation forms part of a critical turn against interpretations that neglect the aesthetic character of the novel (59–79).

⁷ For a classification of the types of signs used in the disputation see Demonet M.-L., *Les voix du signe. Nature et origine du langage à la Renaissance* (1480–1580) (Paris – Geneva: 1992) 275–282. An interpretation of the mocking gestures is provided by Roloff V., “Zeichensprache und Schweigen. Zu Rabelais, *Pantagruel XVIII–XX* und *Tiers Livre XIX–XX*”, *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 90 (1974) 99–140. Cf. Schmitt J.-C., *La Raison des gestes dans l’occident médiéval* (Paris: 1990); Signa loquendi: *Die cluniacensischen Signa-Listen*, ed. W. Jarecki (Baden – Baden: 1981).

thumb in the bend of the little finger of the left hand, slowly wagging its four fingers in the air. Then he switched round, doing with the left what he had done with the right, and with the right what he had done with the left.⁸

A high degree of detailed visualization is expected from the reader, and as we may assume that many of Rabelais' contemporaries would have read this text aloud, maybe surrounded by a group of listeners, the embodiment of the single steps of gesticulation may well have been a common response to the text. This is all the more likely as Rabelais couples rhetorical *enargeia*, the technique of putting something before the reader's eyes by means of words, with a strategy of defamiliarization.⁹ Only when one enacts the description step by step can it be seen that Thaumaste in fact 'cocks a snook' (thumbs his nose) at his opponent – and while this results in a fundamental tension between the heightened atmosphere of academic disputation and the performance of the two opponents, the audience in the narrated world turns a blind eye.

Gestures have been categorized by Augustine as 'verba visibilia', visible words.¹⁰ Rabelais' narrator, however, does not refer to conventional gestures, but describes the handsigns made in overflowing detail, just as if the point of view was too close to the object or as if the gesture was observed for the first time. This is what Viktor Shklovsky termed *ostranenie* ('making strange'), depriving the familiar of its familiarity in order to impede recognition and prolong the process of perception.¹¹ Yet in Rabelais' case, the device is not employed to

⁸ Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. Screech 101; also see *Oeuvres complètes* 286–287: 'Lors feist l'Angloys tel signe. La main gausche toute ouverte il leva haulte en l'air. Puis ferma on poing les quatre doigts d'ycelle, et le poulse extendu assist suz la pinne du nez. Soubdain après leva la dextre toute ouverte, et toute ouverte la baissa joignant le poulse on lieu que fermoyt le petit doigt de la gausche, et les quatre doigtz d'ycelle mouvoyt lentement en l'air. Puis au rebours feist de la dextre ce qu'il avoit faict de la gausche, ce que avoit faict de la dextre'.

⁹ This has also been characterised as the narrator's 'naïveté feinte', see Rigolot F., *Les langages de Rabelais* (Geneva: 1972) 51.

¹⁰ For an interpretation of the episode that builds on this notion see Helgeson J., "Words in the Air". Thaumaste, Nazdecabre, and the Question of Perspicuous Signs", in Leushuis R. (ed.), *Esprit généreux, esprit pantagruélique: Essays by His Students In Honor of François Rigolot* (Geneva: 2008) 177–195.

¹¹ Shklovsky V., "Art as Technique", in Lemon L.T. – Reis M.J. (eds.), *Russian Formalist Criticism. Four Essays* (Lincoln: 1965) 3–24, here 12: "The purpose of art is to impart the sensation of things as they are perceived and not as they are known. The technique of art is to make objects "unfamiliar", to make forms difficult, to increase

prolong aesthetic enjoyment per se, as Shklovsky would have it, but rather to help enigmatize the narration in order to mirror the obscure topic of the dispute by hampering visualization. At the core of the episode is thus a discrepancy in perception: while the addressees of the debate, the eminent members of the university of Paris, do not discern what is happening right in front of them, the reader is provoked to ‘a roar of laughter’ as he realizes the vulgarity of the gestures by visualizing them himself.¹²

Rabelais’ breaking up of his narration of signs into bits and pieces below the conceptual threshold is dependent on the fact that the disputation between Panurge and Thaumaste cannot be seen by the reader. Contrary to Petrarch’s and Poliziano’s designation of Homer, the poet, as the prince of *painters*, who excels even the legendary Apelles in his way with words,¹³ Rabelais undermines precisely the powers of evocation credited to literary texts in the Renaissance. The description shows itself off as a description and exhibits the opacity of narrative. In this regard, it hints at the Aristotelian notion of the marvelous or *thaumaston*, which is discussed as a key device for literary effect in the *Poetics* (24, 1460a). While the admirable was necessary in drama, Aristotle decreed that it was better suited to epic or narrative, as it thrives on what cannot be seen: ‘Now then, it is necessary in tragedy to create the marvelous, but the epic admits, even more, of the irrational (*alogon*), on which the marvelous especially depends, because the audience does not see the person acting. The whole business of the pursuit of Hector [in the *Ilias*] would appear ridiculous on the stage with some men standing about and not pursuing and Achilles nodding at them to keep them back; but in the narrative description of epic, this absurdity escapes notice’. By echoing the key term of a central passage in the *Poetics* that reflects on medial difference, Thaumaste’s name, which has been subject to a multitude of interpretations,¹⁴ thus also ties in with the theme of (in-)visibility.

the difficulty and length of perception because the process of perception is an aesthetic end in itself and must be prolonged’.

¹² Bowen B.C., *The Age of Bluff: Paradox and Ambiguity in Rabelais and Montaigne* (Urbana: 1972) 45.

¹³ Compare Rosen V. von, “Die Enargeia des Gemäldes. Zur einem vergessenen Inhalt des *Ut-pictura-poiesis* und seiner Relevanz für das cinquecenteske Bildkonzept”, *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 27 (2000) 171–208.

¹⁴ See for a summary Screech M.A., *Rabelais* (London: 1979) 90–92; Duval E.M., *The Design of Rabelais’s Pantagruel* (New Haven – London: 1991) 82.

While the episode offers itself as an implicit commentary on poetological norms current at the time, these devices are also employed to underline the core topic of secrecy. To be more precise, the specific blindness that the debate's audience exhibits towards the obscenity of the process, as well as the artificial blinding of the reader, for whom conventional (mocking) gestures are deprived of their status as signs and made unrecognizable (even though openly displayed), point towards practices commonly associated with hermeticism.¹⁵

The Thaumaste episode not only revolves around a *grand secret*, it also pictures the *modus operandi* of hermeticism, which consists in preserving secret knowledge while at the same time making it known that protocols of secrecy are being followed.¹⁶ One of the most prominent proponents of this type of discourse in the Renaissance was Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, who cultivated, according to Edgar Wind's felicitous phrase, a style of 'elliptic vulgarization' of *mysteria*: 'The fact that these sublime revelations were not easily accessible seemed to heighten their authority. And yet, if their authority was to be felt, it was not sufficient to keep the mysteries hidden; they must also be known to exist. Hence Pico contrived, when he wrote about mysteries, a style [...] which enabled him to hint at the secrets that he professed to withhold. [...] The proper manner for an official mystagogue, he suggested, was to speak in riddles, in words that are 'published and not published' ('editos esse et non editos').¹⁷

If we assume that the episode is not only self-referential but points towards contemporary debates about secrets, what kind of secret could have been in the air in sixteenth century France? A discourse of secrecy that was met with considerable interest, according to D.P. Walker's classical study, was the idea of a *prisca philosophia*, a pagan philosophy which was presumed to mirror and support the

¹⁵ I use the term hermeticism to refer to a larger field of fascination with the occult that transcends the concrete study of the hermetic corpus as such (which in contrast is termed 'hermetism'), cf. Merkel I. – Debus A.G. (eds.), *Hermeticism and the Renaissance. Intellectual History and the Occult in Early Modern Europe* (Washington – London – Toronto: 1988).

¹⁶ Compare the useful distinction between hiding something ('Verheimlichung') and keeping a secret ('Geheimhaltung') proposed by Hahn A., "Soziologische Aspekte von Geheimnissen und ihren Äquivalenten", in Assmann A. – Assmann J. (eds.), *Schleier und Schwelle. Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation V. Vol. 1. Geheimnis und Öffentlichkeit* (Munich: 1997) 23–39.

¹⁷ Wind E., *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance* (London: 1968) 11.

truths of Christian belief.¹⁸ It was conceived of as secret knowledge which God had revealed to a select few and which was codified only in encrypted form, if at all. It was passed on from one initiate to the next, from Zoroaster to Hermes Trismegistos, both supposedly contemporaries of Moses, on to Orpheus, Aglaophemus, Pythagoras and eventually to Plato.¹⁹

Pythagoras, the penultimate link in the chain, was the philosopher of music and mathematics, but also of silence and secrecy – the ‘omnis secretioris philosophie princeps’, the prince of all secret philosophy, as he was at times referred to around 1500.²⁰ He was also termed ‘magister silentii’, teacher of silence, because he refrained from speech, culminating in the lore that he submitted all aspiring disciples to five years of silence, which was a commonplace notion in the Renaissance.²¹ Philostratus had mused that this long period of silence had a preparatory function for the secrets the adepts would later be initiated to – had they not been trained thoroughly, they would not have been able to keep the arcane knowledge which the Pythagorean sect was said to possess under veils.²² In the novel, it is Thaumaste who is put in a typological relationship with Pythagoras. Not only is it he who proposes the silent mode of dispute, he also mirrors the philosopher in his pursuit of deep mysteries. Because he crossed the canal after having heard ‘le bruyt de [Pantagruel’s] sçavoir tant inestimable’, he is compared to ‘Pythagoras, qui visita les vaticinateurs Memphiticques’.²³

In addition to the predilection for silence, Pythagoreism in the Renaissance was mostly associated with numbers, both in the philosophical

¹⁸ Walker D.P., “The Prisca Theologia in France”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 17 (1954) 204–259.

¹⁹ Celenza C.S., “Pythagoras in the Renaissance: The Case of Marsilio Ficino”, *Renaissance Quarterly* 52 (1999) 667–711, esp. 675. Cf. the list of *prisci theologi* in Ficino M., *Platonic Theology*. Books V–VIII, eds. J. Hankins – W. Bowen, trans. M.J. Allen – J. Warden (Cambridge, MA – London: 2002) VI, I, 124/126, 384. Ficino reckoned this group to be the pagan counterpart of Moses and the prophets.

²⁰ Eck J., *Briefwechsel*, eds. V. Pfñür – P. Fabisch – H.J. Gerste (online edition <http://ivv7srv15.uni-muenster.de/mnkg/pfnuer/Eck-Briefe.html>), Nr. 3, Eck to Simprecht von Burgau, 1506.

²¹ Wind, *Pagan Mysteries* 53f., n. 4; an important source for both the teachings of and the anecdotes surrounding Pythagoras in the Renaissance is Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, trans. R.D. Hicks, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA: 1979) vol. II 320–367.

²² Philostratus, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, trans. F.C. Conybeare (Cambridge, MA: 1960) I, 1, 5.

²³ Rabelais, *Oeuvres complètes* 281.

and the occult sense. In order to signal this notion by way comic subversion, a (fictitious) mode of disputation, ‘par noms’, attributed to Pythagoras and claimed by the narrator to have been pursued by Pico della Mirandola in his canceled Roman disputation of 900 theses, is disqualified as a viable method for the debate.

The silent debate is then opened by Thaumaste by four clashes of his fingernails. As other gestures are also executed four times, the narrator assigns a prominent place to the number which was held in particular esteem in both Pythagorean and Neoplatonic traditions of thought, but which also figured prominently in contemporary occult discourses.²⁴ As there were several academies in France that dedicated themselves to the Pythagorean philosophy of numbers in the early sixteenth century, number symbolism was a topic well known beyond initiate circles.²⁵

The themes which had been proposed by Thaumaste as topics for disputation (but which are never elaborated on) also point distinctly to a popular conception of Pythagoreism, which was strongly tied to divinatory practices in the early sixteenth century. Jacques Lefèvre d’Étaples authored a *Magia naturalis* (1492–94), the second book of which was entitled “De Pithagorica philosophia quae ad Magiam introducit”. The text is held to have promoted, for the first time in France, the connection between Kabbalah, magic and Pythagoreism.²⁶ In addition to this type of scholarly discourse, Rabelais could count on a rather amorphous corpus of general, oftentimes vague knowledge,

²⁴ Heninger S.K., *Touches of Sweet Harmony. Pythagorean Cosmology and Renaissance Poetics* (San Marino, CA: 1974) esp. 151ff. For a discussion of the close association between Pythagoreism and Neoplatonism since late antiquity see Celenza, “Pythagoras in the Renaissance” 671, including references to the relevant literature. As evidence for the relevance of the number four as a principle in structuring knowledge about the world cf. the *scala quaternarii* in Agrippa von Nettesheim H.C., *De occulta philosophia*, ed. K.A. Nowotny (Graz: 1967, facsimile of the edition s.l.:1533) lib. II, cap. VIII, table fol. CXII.

²⁵ See Yates F.A., *The French Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London: 1947; reprint ed., 1988).

²⁶ Copenhaver B.P., “Lefèvre d’Étaples, Symphorien Champier, and the Secret Names of God”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 40 (1977) 189–211, esp. 200. Kabbalah, which was linked to Pythagoreism via the concern with numbers, was an emerging field of knowledge, figuring in France only from the early sixteenth century onwards. François Secret has identified the first use of the term in Symphorien Champier’s *Ars parva Galeni* (1516), while Brian Copenhaver has found an even earlier reference in François Tiassard’s *De iudeorum ritibus* (1508). Secret F., *Les Kabbalistes chrétiens de la Renaissance* (Paris: 1964) 152; Copenhaver, “Lefèvre d’Étaples” 208.

anecdotes and popular beliefs as a social intertext for his references to Pythagoreism. In this vein, ‘geomantie’ and ‘caballe’, the specific topics proposed by Thaumaste as subjects for disputation,²⁷ could be assumed to register as constituents of a semantic field of secret knowledge, even without presuming in-depth study of particular texts. In the first half of the sixteenth century, Pythagoras was commonly associated with divination; it was believed that Pythagoras himself had acquired the skill during his travels to Egypt.²⁸ Geomancy, originally relying on the interpretation of patterns formed by tossed handfuls of soil or sand, had moved into script. It was now based on dots and lines on paper, and at least in France it was closely associated with Pythagoreism through the rote of Pythagoras, a fortune-telling device which would appear as an appendix in Christophe Cattan’s 1558 *Geomance*.²⁹

Pythagoras’s name thus spanned the whole range of secret knowledge, from the *prisca philosophia* that was expected to confirm the revealed wisdom of Christianity to divinatory practices that spilled over into popular discourse. In what follows I will argue that in the Thaumaste episode, however, the reference to Pythagoreism is not limited to supporting the motifs of silence and secrecy.³⁰ Rather, early modern discussions of certain aspects of Pythagorean philosophy were also linked to a hermeneutical problem, that of the literal and figural interpretation of texts. It is this problem, I will argue, that is equally present in the episode as it is embodied by the disputants. In order to make this point, we will have to turn to the exchange of gestures once more.

Both disputants go beyond mere handsigns in their signalling, and both are physically involved in rather extreme ways:

Thaumaste struggled up painfully, but in so doing let off a baker’s fart – for the bran came afterwards – [and copiously pissed vinegar,] making

²⁷ ‘Geomantie’ was used only in the edition of 1533; from 1534 the terms ‘magie’ and ‘alkymie’, which had been present in the first edition of 1532, were omitted. See Mireille Huchon’s commentary in Rabelais, *Œuvres complètes* 1305.

²⁸ Heninger, *Touches of Sweet Harmony* 237ff.

²⁹ Christophe Cattan, *La Geomance* [...]. *Liure non moins plaisant & recreatif, que d’ingenueuse inuention, pour scauoir toutes choses, presentes, passées, & à aduenir, Auec la Roüe de Pythagoras* (Paris: 1558). Cf. Heninger, *Touches of Sweet Harmony* 68, n. 56f.

³⁰ I have discussed the dimensions of the problem of silence in “*Ce que se taire veut dire*. Die Zeichendisputation in Rabelais’ *Pantagruel* und die Inszenierung von Wissen als knowing how”, in Hempfer K.W. – Traninger A. (eds.), *Dynamiken des Wissens* (Freiburg i.Br.: 2007) 109–142.

a hell of a stink. Those present began to hold their noses, for he was messing himself in anxiety. He then raised his right hand, closing it in such a way as to bring the tips of all the fingers together, and the left he placed flat against his breast.

Whereupon Panurge pulled on his long codpiece with the tassel attached and stretched it out for a good arm-and-a-half's length, holding it up in the air with his left hand, and with his right he took out his orange, tossing it seven times into the air; on the eighth he hid it in the palm of his right which he quietly held up high. He then began wagging his beautiful codpiece about, exposing it to Thaumaste.³¹

Of course this offers itself to a reading in the sense of the Bakhtinian 'economy of the body' and a privileging of the lower bodily stratum that forgoes all rule and all measure. But with a view to the hints at secret meaning and references to Pythagoreism, I am tempted to see another level of signification at work. I would like to advance the thesis that the apparently non-signifying, purely obscene confrontation of the phallic braguette and anal defecation carries a subtext which points to a contemporary problem, namely, that of the adequate reading of text.

Panurge's flamboyant codpiece or braguette has been interpreted as a sign of a triumphant virility which contrasts Thaumaste's weak and effeminate passivity. With the constellation thus biased, it seems to offer itself as a metonymy of Rabelais' alleged favourite scenario: the victory of a lusty, masculine humanist programme of reform over a sickly, obsolete scholasticism.³² There can be no doubt that a

³¹ Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. Screech 106; also see *Oeuvres complètes* 288: 'Thaumaste de grand hahan se leva, mais en se levant fist un gros pet de boulangier: car le bran vint après et pissa vinaigre bien fort, et puoit comme tous les diables, les assistans commencèrent se estouper les nez, car il se conchioit de angustie, puis leva la main dextre la clouant en telle faczon, qu'il assembloit les boutz de tous les doigts ensemble, et la main gauche assist toute pleine sur la poictrine.'

À quoy Panurge tira sa longue braguette avecques son Floc, et l'estendit d'une coulée et demie, et la tenoit en l'air de la main gauche, et de la dextre print sa pomme d'orange, et la gettant en l'air par sept foys, à la huytiesme la cacha au poing de la dextre, la tenant en hault tout coy, puis commença secouer sa belle braguette, la montrant à Thaumaste'.

³² Persels J.C., "Bragueta Humanística, or Humanism's Codpiece", *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 28 (1997) 79–99, here 91 and 93. That Rabelais would side with humanism in order to defeat an outdated scholasticism is a view defended by Defaux G., *Rabelais agonistes: Du rieur au prophète, études sur Pantagruel, Gargantua, Le Quart Livre* (Geneva: 1997).

demonstrative virility is prevalent in all of the *Pentalogy*³³ as well as in the cultural setting of the Renaissance in general. But in the context of the Thaumaste episode, the operations of the braguette must be read not in their triumph over but with regard to their relation with Thaumaste's defecation.

The drastic bodily lapses offer themselves to interpretation because they happen in the middle of the exchange and by no means disrupt the discussion or end the debate. They are embedded within the exchange of signs, and while it is certainly legitimate to register the deadpan continuation of the performance as a vehicle of comic effect, Rabelais himself instructs us to dig deeper – a point to which I shall return.

But if Thaumaste's digestive issues and Panurge's phallic exhibitionism are to be assigned meaning within a communicative act, how are we to decipher them? Another look at early modern notions of Pythagoreism will be helpful. One of the aspects which found resonance beyond the discourse of esoteric philosophy even in its popular manifestations were the so called *symbola Pythagorae*, also known in antiquity as *akousmata* ('things heard'). From a distant point of view, these thirty-nine maxims resemble an unsystematic list of rules regarding practical aspects of life: Abstain from beans; put on your right shoe first; help with loading a cart, but not with unloading it; do not wear the likeness of a god on your ring, etc.³⁴ There is indeed a theory that the *akousmata* were in the first place rules for the *vita Pythagorica*, mostly relating to norms of cleanliness and, consequently, to a sacralisation of all realms of life.³⁵ Another theory holds that they functioned as passwords among circles of initiates.³⁶

But from the very beginning a discussion about interpretation was attached to the sayings. Two main positions were put forward: Iamblichus, the fourth-century Neoplatonist and author of a life of Pythagoras, stressed, with reference to Aristotle, that they must be taken literally; but early on the opinion prevailed that they had a deeper meaning, that the *akousmata* were indeed *ainigmata*, riddles, which clothed elevated wisdom in a language incomprehensible for the

³³ See Gvozdeva K., "Celebrating Men in Rabelais", *Romance Studies* 23 (2005) 77–90.

³⁴ A list of *akousmata* is given by Burkert W., *Weisheit und Wissenschaft. Studien zu Pythagoras, Philolaos und Platon* (Nuremberg: 1962) 155–157.

³⁵ Riedweg Chr., *Pythagoras. Leben – Lehre – Nachwirkung. Eine Einführung* (Munich: 2002) 90.

³⁶ Celenza, *Pythagoras in the Renaissance* 691.

non-initiated.³⁷ Walter Burkert has argued that this shift from literal to allegorical or symbolic interpretation caused the terminological shift from *akousmata* to *symbola*.³⁸

These *symbola* then continued to figure in the Western textual tradition from Aristotle to Aquinas, from the Church fathers to Giovanni Picos *Oratio de dignitate hominis* and Angelos Poliziano's *Lamia* as well as in numerous other textual formats and configurations.³⁹ The first translation of the entire list of 39 *symbola* into Latin was provided by Marsilio Ficino, who also wrote a brief commentary on select sayings.⁴⁰ When Rabelais alluded to them in his prologue to *Gargantua*, the second published and chronologically first novel of the cycle, it was clear that he did not have some general symbolism in mind, but the specific tradition of literal and allegorical reading that had been applied to the *symbola* almost since their inception.

Rabelais designated his chronicles themselves as *symboles Pythagoriques*, which could be deciphered by careful reading and frequent meditation. Like a dog that gnaws open a bone, the reader could then suck out the *mouelle sustantifique*, the substantial marrow.⁴¹ This image is normally attributed to Rabelais' poetic inventiveness, but it is

³⁷ Walter Burkert attributes this notion to Androkydes; see Burkert, *Weisheit und Wissenschaft* 158.

³⁸ Burkert, *Weisheit und Wissenschaft* 160.

³⁹ Heneriger, *Touches of Sweet Harmony* 58 and 66, n. 54.

⁴⁰ Ficino M., "Symbola Pithagoræ philosophi", in Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis Aegyptiorum*, ed. M. Ficino (Frankfurt a.M.: 1972, facsimile of the edition Venice: 1503) 307f.; "Commentariolus in symbola Pythagorae", in *Supplementum Ficinianum*, 2 vols., ed. P.O. Kristeller (Florence: 1937, repr. 1973) vol. II, 100–103; the commentary was never printed.

⁴¹ 'Puis par curieuse leçon, et meditation frequente rompre l'os, et sugcer la sustantifque mouelle. C'est à dire: ce que j'entends par ces symboles Pythagoriques avecques espoir certain d'estre faictz escors et preux à ladite lecture.' [...] and then, by careful reading and frequent meditation, to crack open the bone and seek out the substantifical marrow – that is to say, what I mean by such Pythagorean symbols – sure in the hope that you will be made witty and wise by that reading', Prologue to *Gargantua*, *Œuvres complètes* 6; trans. Screech 207. G. Mallary Masters had concluded that the *symbola* themselves were the hidden truth to be extracted: 'Rabelais [...] indicates clearly that it [i.e. his work] contains "sustantifque mouelle", Pythagorean symbols, which must be sucked out.' Masters G.M., "On Learned Ignorance, or How to Read Rabelais: Part I, Theory", *Romance Notes* 19 (1978/79) 127–132, here 130. Farrell M., "The Alchemy of Rabelais' Marrow Bone", *Modern Language Studies* 13 (1983) 97–104, here 99, interprets the reference to the *symbola* in general terms as 'symbolism'. Farrell identifies the qualification of marrow as nutriment for the bones as conceived of by Galen at the root of the metaphor, yet Plato's designation of marrow as the link between body and soul seems to me to be an even more important point of reference (*Timaios*, 73b–d, c. 33).

actually linked not only to the discussion about modes of interpretation that was bound to the *symbola*, but also, by way of intertextual markers, to one relevant work that enjoyed a wide reception in the early sixteenth century.

The immensely popular professor of rhetoric at Bologna, Filippo Beroaldo the Elder, who had also spent a year at the University of Paris in 1476, published with the *Symbola Pythagorae moraliter explicata* of 1503 one of the most widely disseminated early modern editions with commentary on the *symbola*. But it is not only its circulation that allows us to relate this work to Rabelais' novels; in the dedicatory letter, Beroaldo uses precisely the metaphor of shell and marrow to advertise his interpretations of the *symbola*:⁴²

I do not deny that this is an exceedingly small gift if you only look at the outer shell, but if you look at the marrow inside, you will judge it to be precious. It is a small work in which the symbola of Pythagoras are explicated according to a tropological and moral understanding, without doubt a succulent thing, and no less fruitful than pleasurable.⁴³

Unlike Rabelais, Beroaldo applies the metaphor of shell and marrow to his own tropological interpretation of the *symbola*. But in taking up Beroaldo' imagery, Rabelais insinuates the relevance of this book, which should prompt us to take a closer look.

One of the best known *symbola*,⁴⁴ which is honoured by Beraldo with a comparatively elaborate commentary that concludes his work, was the one that prescribes abstinence from beans: 'A fabis abstinentium esse'. Pythagoras was not only held to have been a vegetarian, he was specifically said to have abstained from eating beans. In Lucian's *Verae historiae*, a text admired and beloved in the Renaissance, this dietary habit makes him a rather sad bystander at a feast of beans in

⁴² For bio-bibliographical references see Celenza C.S., *Piety and Pythagoras in Renaissance Florence. The Symbolum Nesianum* (Leiden – Boston – Cologne: 2001) 52f, n. 187; the dedicatory epistle and its recipient are discussed at 54f.

⁴³ See Beroaldo Filippo, "Symbola Pythagoræ a Philippo Beroaldo moraliter explicata", in idem, *Varia Philippi Beroaldi opuscula* (Basel, Petri: 1515), fols. XCIX^v–CX^v, esp. fol. C^r: 'Munusculum est oppido pusillum, nec inficior si corticem exteriorem tantum species, sed si medullam interiorem introspexeris/ preciosum iudicabis. Opusculum est, quo symbola Pythagoræ per tropologiam moralemque intellectum expllicantur, res haud dubie succulenta, nec minus frugifera quam voluptifica'.

⁴⁴ Heninger, *Touches of Sweet Harmony* 275.

celebration of military victory on the Island of the blest.⁴⁵ Because this saying appeared to point to Pythagoras himself, the saying on beans was a mainstay in collections of *symbola*; Erasmus opened his *Adagia* first with nine (and in later editions up to 36) of the *symbola*, with the ban on beans already included in the first edition.⁴⁶

Erasmus's discussion of this *symbolum* also hints at the specific function the *symbola* were assigned in humanist discourse: They were starting points for exploring various possible hermeneutical approaches to a text. They were 'efficient secrets' which allowed for a host of interpretations, not least because there was no dogmatic framework at stake which would set a limit to hermeneutic ingenuity.⁴⁷ 'Symbolum vocabulum est, vt grammatici docent, polysemon, id est plura significans',⁴⁸ as Beroaldo put it. Contrary to the Bible, whose interpretation had to be in tune with salvific history, the *symbola* allowed for a playing out of the possibilities of interpretation without the necessity to work towards coherence and consistency. Discrepancy was allowed to prevail.

How was the norm that beans must be avoided interpreted? Above all, the dictum on beans was typically addressed as being particularly enigmatic. While other *symbola* were explicated in terms of a specific reading (which may of course shift from commentator to commentator), a host of diverse interpretations was presented for the verdict on beans: 'Huius aerigmatis varia reperitur interpretatio.' 'Discordes sunt variæque sententiæ eruditorum, cur Pythagoras a fabis abstinendum esse censuerit.'⁴⁹

Beroaldo's discussion at first closely follows Aulus Gellius' *Noctes atticae*, a compilation of brief notes on grammatical problems, of amusing episodes and excerpts from classical authors in twenty books

⁴⁵ "A True Story", in *Lucian in Eight Volumes*, trans. A.M. Harmon (Cambridge, MA: 1979) I 248–357 (II, 24, 328f.).

⁴⁶ See Heninger S.K., "Pythagorean Symbola in Erasmus' *Adagia*", *Renaissance Quarterly* 21 (1968) 162–165.

⁴⁷ Andree M., *Archäologie der Medienwirkung. Faszinationstypen von der Antike bis heute* (Munich: 2006) 168.

⁴⁸ Beroaldo, *Opuscula* fol. C^v.

⁴⁹ Erasmus, *Opera omnia*. II/I: *Adagiorum chilias prima*, ed. M.L. van Poll – van de Lisdonk, M. Mann Phillips, Chr. Robinson (Amsterdam: 1993) 2.viii, "A fabis abstineto", 96–99, here 96; 'A fabis abstinendum', Beroaldo, *Opuscula* fols. CVIII^v–CX^v (CVIII^v).

which he himself edited in 1503.⁵⁰ Gellius reports Cicero's assessment that the verdict on beans can be explained with regard to the unpleasant flatulence they produce which 'is disturbing to those who seek mental calm'.⁵¹ The host of the further opinions adduced, however, advocates a contrarian interpretation: As an instance of radical irony, the *symbolum* is to be understood as signifying the contrary of what it says: that beans must be eaten. Pythagoras himself is said to have availed himself to no other vegetable more often as it relaxed the bowels and relieved him.

Yet another reading is possible: 'Beans' in the saying does not signify 'beans' but 'testicles', a reading lifted from a verse of Empedocles, a follower of Pythagoras, that runs:

O wretches, utter wretches, from beans withhold your hands

Students of Empedocles insisted that he is not referring to the vegetable, but to the male reproductive organs – 'and therefore Empedocles in that verse desired to keep men, not from eating beans, but from excess' in sexual activity ('a rei veneriae prolubio').⁵² Diogenes Laertius quotes Aristotle's lost work *On the Pythagoreans* as a reference for the same interpretation, 'Pythagoras counselled abstinence from beans, either because they are like the genitals', and he continues in the cumulative manner typical for discussions of this particular saying, 'or because they are like the gates of hades [...] or because they are injurious, or because they are like the form of the universe, or because they belong to oligarchy, since they are used in election by lot'.⁵³

As Filippo Beroaldo aims at providing tropological (or moral) readings of the *symbola*, he takes this as the starting point for a discussion of the right amount of sexual activity, with medical indication on the one side of the spectrum and the public *mastuprator* Diogenes on the other.

⁵⁰ See Heath M., "Gellius in the French Renaissance", in *The Worlds of Aulus Gellius*, ed. L. Holford-Strevens – A. Vardi (Oxford: 2004) 282–317, here 282f. The text established by Beroaldo formed the basis for the first French edition in 1508.

⁵¹ That beans induce flatulence is also discussed by Diogenes Laertius as the reason for Pythagoras' rule of abstinence, see VIII, 24, 340f.

⁵² Aulus Gellius, *The Attic Nights*. Books I–V, trans. John C. Rolfe (Cambridge, MA: 2002) IV, XI. Empedocles' verse is rendered by Beroaldo as 'Ah miseri a cyamo miseri subducite dextras', Beroaldo, *Opuscula* fol. CIXr.

⁵³ Diogenes Laertius VIII, 34, 348f.

Despite the host of interpretations covered, the discussions of the verdict on beans fall in but two categories: first, a literal one, augmented by the possibility of an antiphrastic interpretation that turns the verdict into a recommendation; and second, an allegorical category, in which ‘bean’ is taken to stand for something else. If taken in an allegorical sense, ‘beans’ refer most prominently to scatological or phallic activity. Not only is the thematic affinity between Beroaldo’s discussion and the corporeal aspects of the disputation quite conspicuous, the two-fold mode of interpretation is also explicitly addressed in the episode. This is what happens when Panurge responds to Thau>maste’s thumbing of his nose in the following way:

Panurge, not at all surprised, lifted his trismegistical codpiece up into the air with his left hand and with his right drew forth from it a white splinter of bone taken from the rib of an ox, and then two identically shaped pieces of wood, one of black ebony and the other of scarlet brasil-wood, arranging them most symmetrically between the fingers of that same hand and clacking them together with the sound the lepers of Brittany make with their clappers – more resonant, though, and more harmonious – meanwhile, retracting his tongue into his mouth, he joyfully produced a buzzing noise, keeping his eyes still fixed on the Englishman.

The theologians, physicians and surgeons who were present thought that he was inferring by that sign that the Englishman was a leper: the counsellors, jurists and canon lawyers believed that by so doing he intended to conclude that some kind of human felicity consists in the leprous state, as our Lord maintained long ago.⁵⁴

The hermeneutically trained Paris scholars, as a matter of course, immediately slip into the practice of two-fold interpretation as they were wont to do in the study of Scripture. According to the *sensus litteralis*, the clacking of wood is interpreted as the typical noise of

⁵⁴ Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, trans. Screech 104f.; also see *Oeuvres complètes* 287: ‘Panurge de ce non estonné tyra en l’air sa tresmegiste braguette de la gausche, et de la dextre en tira un transon de couste bovine blanche et deux pieces de voys de forme pareille, l’une de Ebene noir, l’autre de Bresil incarnat, et les mist entre les doigts d’ycelle en bonne symmetrie, et les chocquant ensemble, faisoyt son, tel que font les ladres en Bretaigne avecques leurs clicquettes mieulx toutesfoys resonnant et plus harmonieus: et de la langue contracte dedans la bouche fredonnoyt joyeusement, tousjours regardant l’Angloys.

Les theologiens, medicins, et chirurgiens penserent que par ce signe il inferoyt, l’Angloys estre ladre. Les conseilliers, legistes et decretistes, pensoient que ce faisant il vouloyt conclurre, quelque espece de felicité humaine consister en estat de ladrye, comme jadys maintenoyt le seigneur’.

lepers who were forced to carry a leper's rattle in order to warn others of their coming. The other side of the hall goes for the *sensus spiritualis* by drawing upon the biblical story of Lazarus who, after enduring a miserable life as a beggar and leper, finds himself in Abraham's bosom after his death (*Luke 16:19–31*).

While the presented gestures are apt to confuse both the diegetic audience and the reader, the trusted habit of two-fold reading canalisés the worryingly ambiguous signals. And while the theologians and doctors may be depicted as acting mechanically and without inspiration, they still manage to accommodate the illegible within their conceptual framework.

The *locus classicus* for the explication of the practical knowledge that is the traditional dual mode of hermeneutics is Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*. There are, according to Augustine, two kinds of signs, *signa propria* (literal) and *signa translata* (metaphorical). They are called literal when they are used to signify the things for which they were invented ('propter quas sunt instituta'), and they are called metaphorical when they are used to signify something else ('ad aliquid aliud significandum usurpantur').⁵⁵ While designed to regulate the reading of scripture, this distinction at the same time adds a potential double meaning to any proposition, as it introduces a difference between the surface of a text and a semantic abyss lingering beneath.⁵⁶ Every utterance could thus hide a secret. As the issue of secrecy is explicitly discussed by the characters in the episode and the theme is reinforced at the level of narration through recurring allusions to Pythagoreism, we are induced to believe that there is indeed a *plus hault sens* that underlies the disputators' gesticulation. This is essentially the ambiguity which the Thaumaste episode imposes on the fictitious audience just as it does on the reader, namely, that every

⁵⁵ Augustine, *De doctrina christiana*, ed. and trans. R.P.H. Green (Oxford: 1995) II, 32. Augustine's theory of signs of course has more and deeper implications that I am not in a position to discuss here. See for Augustine's conflation of a theory of signs and a theory of language Manetti G., *Theories of the Sign in Classical Antiquity*, trans. C. Richardson (Bloomington: 1993) 157–168; for the traditions of rhetoric and biblical hermeneutics that equally inform Augustine's understanding of allegory see Kablitz A., "Rhetorik vs. Hermeneutik? Anmerkungen zum Allegorie-Verständnis in Augustinus' *De doctrina Christiana*", *Kodikas/Code. Ars Semeiotica* 10 (1987) 119–133; Eden K., "The Rhetorical Tradition and Augustinian Hermeneutics in 'De Doctrina Christiana'", *Rhetorica* 8 (1990) 45–63.

⁵⁶ Compare the discussion in Andree, *Archäologie der Medienwirkung* 156–203.

gesture could mean what it visualizes or what it means by convention, but it could just as well signify something completely different.

The difficulty that comes with such a notion of a multi-layered text is of course judging which way of reading applies to a particular portion of text. Augustine presents a rule which strikes one as simple enough within the context for which it was formulated: ‘anything in the divine discourse that cannot be related either to good morals or to the true faith should be taken as figurative.’⁵⁷ Augustine warns in particular against the literal reading of tropes (‘Nam in principio cavendum est ne figuratam locutionem ad litteram accipias’): To take a figurative expression literally equals reading it in a carnal way (‘carnaliter’). Augustine of course chooses a metaphor which, in the context of an ideology of the body as a sin-ridden and unreliable burden, connotes a moral wrongdoing implied in misinterpreting an allegorical text. But as the grotesque body is at the signifying center of the episode, it has to be asked whether the carnal pursuits of the disputants do not indeed relate to this very hermeneutical problem.

If one thing is beyond doubt and clearly visible in the debate in signs, it is that the two disputants engage their bodies beyond mere hand signs – they literally act *carnaliter*. And if it is decreed wrong to read an allegorical text *carnaliter*, would it not be perfectly Rabelaisian in spirit to have Panurge and Thaumaste do exactly that, act out deeper meaning in a corporeal manner?

First, there are obvious literal readings of metaphorical turns of phrase. Panurge’s promise to make Thaumaste ‘chier vinaigre’ (piss vinegar), a turn of phrase indicating victory, is of course acted out physically. Panurge’s thrice great codpiece is easily decoded as a literal embodiment of the name of Hermes Trismegistos. And eventually, the overall objective of any medieval and early modern disputation, to force one’s opponent into silence (*faire quinauld*), is even taken as the general protocol for the exchange of signs.

Second, the confrontation of bowel relaxation and phallic ostentation mirrors both the literal and figurative readings of the Pythagorean verdict on beans that were current in the Renaissance. Interpretation on all levels, literal and spiritual, thus refers us back to carnality. The witty twist of the episode is that even at the level of *plus hault sens* or deeper meaning, the level Rabelais instructs us to look for in the

⁵⁷ Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* III, 33.

prologue to *Gargantua*, we are referred back to the baseness of the body. The episode thus comments on and comically subverts the reading instructions we were given explicitly at the level of the paratext, in the course of the episode itself and, indeed, in the Christian tradition of hermeneutics in general. Learned discourse and carnivalesque corporeality converge in the narrated body, which is at the same time *signifiant* and *signifié*, generator and object of meaning.

The strategy of the narrative is thus to allude to fields of secret knowledge that would have had a familiar ring to contemporary readers, even if they were familiar only with popular reworkings of these traditions. Even if these traditions are not acknowledged by its readers, the scene works to full comic effect by the contrasting of a solemn university setting with grossly uncivilized proceedings, as well as through a witty play on visibility and conceptual blindness on all narrative levels. But for any reader with some familiarity with mainstream humanist and scholastic discourses, the frequent references and allusions to Pythagoras might well have evoked the indecent explanations that were circulating with regard to the *symbolum* on beans as well as the interpretative problems connected with the *symbola* in general. The episode thus offers itself as a comically exaggerated commentary on the authoritative methods of interpretation, the correct reading of text, and the mechanisms of *plus hault sens*.

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NATURE DISCERNED: PROVIDENCE AND PERSPECTIVE IN GILLES VAN CONINXLOO'S SYLVA

Catherine Levesque

Karel van Mander begins the life of the landscape painter, Gilles van Coninxloo,¹ by framing the account of his art with reference to a well-known paragone debate:

I have seen dialogues as well as other kinds of writing by two or three different Italian authors in which the two arts of painting and sculpture are discussed as to which is the most important; and they argue to the advantage of our art that the painter makes everything that the eye of mankind can comprehend visually; the heavens, the sky, diverse variations on the weather by which the sun sometimes allows its rays to fall through the clouds onto cities, mountains and valleys, sometimes dark and cloudy, rain, hail, snow; all varieties of green in trees and fields as laughing spring spurs on and arouses the birds to song – the which the sculptor cannot possibly do with his stone – with more and other arguments by which they show that painting is a more attractive and important art than sculpture.²

He then offers Coninxloo's art as proof of his argument noting, 'This would be confirmed and the victory augmented by the artistic works of the excellent landscape painter Gilles van Coninxloo of Antwerp [...].'³ Noteworthy in Van Mander's account is the emphasis on the artist's

¹ Mander Karel van, *The Lives of the illustrious Netherlandish and German painters from the first edition of the Schilderboek*, ed. H. Miedema – trans. D. Cook-Radmore, 6 vols. (Doornspijk: 1994–99) vol. I 328–331; vol. V 74–84. See also idem, *Dutch and Flemish Painters*, ed. C van de Wall (New York: 1936) 306–308; Briels J., *De Zuidnederlandse Immigratie in Amsterdam en Haarlem omstreeks 1572–1630* (Ph.D. dissertation, Utrecht University, Utrecht: 1976) 94, 220–225, 231–244. For the most recent studies on Coninxloo, see Papenbroek M., *Landschaft des Exils: Gilles van Coninxloo und die Frankenthaler Maler* (Cologne: 2001); Büttner N., "Landschaften des Exils? Anmerkungen zu Gilles van Coninxloo und zur Geschichte der flämischen Waldlandschaft aus Anlass einer Neuerscheinung", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 66 (2003) 546–580; and Franz H.G., "Der Landschaftsmaler Gilles van Coninxloo", in Hürkey E.J. – Bürgy-de Ruijter I. (eds.), *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf: Frankenthal um 1600* (Worms: 1995) 103–113.

² Van Mander, *Lives* 329–331.

³ Van Mander, *Lives* 329–331.

ability to paint anything the eye can see – describing not only the landscape but the processes of nature itself. At the end of the biography Van Mander reasserts the connection forged in Coninxloo's landscape paintings between artistic processes and natural processes by affirming, '[...] I know of no better landscape painter in these times; I see that in Holland his manner of working is beginning to be followed a great deal; the trees which stood here somewhat withered begin to grow like his, as far as possible, even though some husbandmen or planters would only grudgingly admit it'.⁴

Van Mander treats landscape painting in the Coninxloo biography as exemplary of the craft of painting itself. The landscape painter's ability to 'paint anything the eye can see' accords with the way he subsequently treats landscape in *Den Grondt*. In that volume – literally the ground or foundation of painting – the overall organization moves from a chapter on the 'action of light' (*lichtval*), specifically reflection (*reflectie*), to a chapter on landscape, which, in turn, moves from describing the phenomena of nature – snow, rain, the movement of waves, clouds and light passing through clouds, the sun) – to discussing the means for rendering those effects.⁵ Here, as in Van Mander's earlier Bruegel commentary, landscape painting exemplifies both painting's capacity to imitate nature and the status of painting as a craft.

Coninxloo, we know from Van Mander and from the subsequent work of archivists and art historians, left Antwerp after its capture by the Duke of Parma.⁶ He had traveled to France in his youth and after the fall of Antwerp, lived for a short time in Zeeland, for much longer in Frankenthal, and finally moved to Amsterdam where he died. Coninxloo came from an artistic family with longstanding connections to the Reformed faith. He himself must have been a committed member of the Reformed church since Frankenthal was a center for the most fervent religious exiles from France and the Netherlands.⁷

⁴ Van Mander, *Lives* 330–331.

⁵ Mander Karel van, *Den Grondt der edel vry schilder-const*, ed. H. Miedema, 2 vols. (Utrecht: 1973). See also Melion W., *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon* (Chicago: 1991) 71–73, 181.

⁶ Miedema, *Commentary* 79–80; Van Mander, *Dutch and Flemish Painters* 330–331; Briels, "De Zuidnederlandse Immigratie" 222.

⁷ Roosbroeck R. van, *Emigranten: nederlandsevluchtelingen in duitsland (1550–1600)* (Leuven: 1968) 298; Hahn A., "'papier const' Zur Druckgraphik des Frankenthaler

Van Mander rightly makes no claims for Coninxloo as the originator of forest scenery.⁸ Nonetheless, he points to ways in which Coninxloo's late paintings of oak forests create a distinct and influential vision of a closed compact world of nature with airy yet impenetrable trees and a landscape that provides only glimpses of a human and animal presence. The qualities Van Mander singles out, the ability to paint anything the eye can see and to revivify withering trees via his art, are evident in these works and contribute to the paintings' hints of past and present metamorphoses. Coninxloo's exquisitely painted forests, beautiful and mysterious, are full of life. In their attention both to the raw material of nature – most notably in the rendering of trees – and also, despite a seemingly natural execution, to the representational craft of painting, these works evoke the classical *sylva*. Here, as in the *sylva* tradition, seeming disorderliness of form is premeditated and arises from a provisional hypothesis of order which remains, however, to be discovered and discerned.⁹ While the concern with the sophisticated play between nature and art as well as sensitivity to the specifics of the natural world and to craft of painting are rooted in artistic tradition, they take on a new urgency in Coninxloo's scenes.

Coninxloo's forests carefully depict believable places, not some arcadian vision. In this they correspond with Calvin's emphasis, in the *Inventory*, that what one sees or observes as real, is real in this material sphere.¹⁰ If, on the other hand, something is contrary to experience, or reason, then it must be considered false. This way of thinking marks a change in attitude towards the material world, and a specific mode of perception. Perception vacillates between the judgment of the eyes of sense and that of the eyes of faith. Coninxloo's paradoxical vision of nature, at once alive and beautiful, but also (at least potentially) a place of death, danger, and mystery would be especially compatible with a Calvinist view of Providence. For Calvin, nature's beauty and order,

Künstlerkreises", in Hürkey – Bürgy-de Ruijter (eds.), *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf* 132–137.

⁸ Gerzi T., "Bruegels Nachwirkung auf die niederländischen Landschaftsmaler um 1600", *Oud Holland* (1981) 201–229; idem, "Landschaftszeichnungen aus der Nachfolge Pieter Bruegels", *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 7 (1965) 92–121; idem, "De boslandschappen van Gilles Coninxloo en hun voorbeelden", *Bulletin Museum Boymans van Beuningen* XIII (1962) 66–85.

⁹ Newmyer S.T., *The Sylvae of Statius Structure and Theme* (Leiden: 1979) 366.

¹⁰ Eire C., *War Against the Idols: the Reformation of Worship from Erasmus to Calvin*, (Cambridge – New York: 1986) 230.

despite being a manifestation of divine Providence, is also fragile and tenuous. As Susan Schreiner notes, 'In Calvin's view, nature serves both a positive and negative function. He is always eager to praise the beauty of creation and to encourage the contemplation of the cosmos. At the same time he stresses that nature humbles human beings and renders them inexcusable'.¹¹ Calvin argues, 'We see, then, that if we have our eyes open to contemplate the providence of God and the natural order that is proposed to us, that order ought to serve as instruction so that we put our full trust in him'.¹² Ultimately, though, both the 'order' of nature and the sudden changes in the cosmos are evidence of God's powerful rule and control over creation.¹³ Disorder, too, must be acknowledged. The requisite stance delicately balances between providence and perception. Such an attitude demands constant trust and is inherently active.

If Coninxloo's forest paintings convey a reformed perspective on nature as evidence of God's Providence and wisdom, then Calvin's related discussion of nature as a reflection of the divine also deserves closer attention in the context of these works. Nature, Calvin says, allows us to see God 'in a mirror'.¹⁴ As a corollary his discussions of Providence are filled with imagery of mirrors, theatres, insignias, and reflections of divine glory. This Reformed inflection emphasizes wisdom as the ability to see things as they are and the need for the properly qualified individual to supply a focus.¹⁵ It calls for labor and attention in making, and for judgment and discernment in viewing.

With the exception of *The Judgment of Midas*, in Dresden, Coninxloo's pre-Amsterdam works are prints rather than paintings. Like *The Judgment of Midas* they are based on Bruegel's world landscape type. Unlike Bruegel's landscape prints, these engravings after paintings or drawings by Coninxloo were not originally published as series; many depict a particular narrative and are supplied with a text or texts. To varying degrees the prints combine woodland scenes with background valleys and mountains. Narrative emphasis, texts, and forest settings direct the viewer's associations and determine his relationship to each

¹¹ Schreiner S.E., *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* (Chicago: 1994) 141.

¹² Schreiner, *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* 135–136.

¹³ Schreiner, *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* 136.

¹⁴ Calvin Jean, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. J. McNeill – trans. F.L. Battles, (Philadelphia: 1960) 52, 160, 180; Schreiner, *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* 141.

¹⁵ Amico L.N., *Bernard Palissy: in Search of Earthly Paradise* (Paris: 1996) 181.

scene. In these pictures Coninxloo reworks the Bruegel tradition. The prints are also quite different from his own later paintings. Nonetheless, the preoccupation with imitation and its implicit relationship with idolatry, already evident in the *Judgment of Midas*, raises questions pertinent for understanding Coninxloo's subsequent work.

Coninxloo's *Landscape with the Prophet Hosea* [Fig. 1] provides an unusual insight into a Calvinist visual hermeneutic.¹⁶ It follows Calvin's prescription for religious imagery in that it is historical rather than devotional. The subject is even, to use Calvin's words, 'of some use for instruction and admonition' since it directly addresses the issues of failed leadership, idolatrous ritual, and the misuse of images raised by the prophet Hosea. Moreover, Calvin's use of Hosea to clarify the relationship between a prophetic vision as a sign or symbol provides indirect evidence of how pictorial signs might be understood. Calvin's opening quotation from Hosea sets the scene, 'The Lord places me [Hosea] here as on a stage (*in theatro*) to explain to you that I have married a wife, a wife habituated to whoredoms, and that I have begotten children by her'.¹⁷ Calvin then goes on to articulate a remarkably suggestive statement on the potential role of images:

All the people knew that he had done no such thing,
but the prophet spoke like this to set before their eyes
a painting—in color (*pictam tabulam*). Such then was
the vision, the figure; not that the prophet knew it by
a vision, but the Lord had bidden him to relate this so to
say parable, that is, similitude, that the people might
recognize, as in a living picture (*in viva picture*) their
wickedness and unfaithfulness. Finally, it is an *hypotiposis*,
in which not only is the reality explained in words
but it is set before our eyes in, as it were, a visible form.¹⁸

Calvin's explanation suggests a complex relationship between words and pictures that enhances our understanding of the *Landscape with the Prophet Hosea*. Viewed in Calvin's terms the image is not a pictorial representation or replica, but rather a way of pointing beyond, of directing attention to what is not seen. Coninxloo's treatment of this

¹⁶ Painted copies after Coninxloo's *Landscape with the Prophet Hosea* include: a watercolor on parchment in the Museum Mayer van den Bergh, Antwerp; an oil painting in the Galeria Caretto, Turin, and, until 1942, another oil painting (perhaps a fragment) in the Erkenbert-Museum, Frankenthal.

¹⁷ Parker T.H.L., *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries* (Westminster: 1986) 207.

¹⁸ Parker, *Calvin's Old Testament Commentaries* 207.

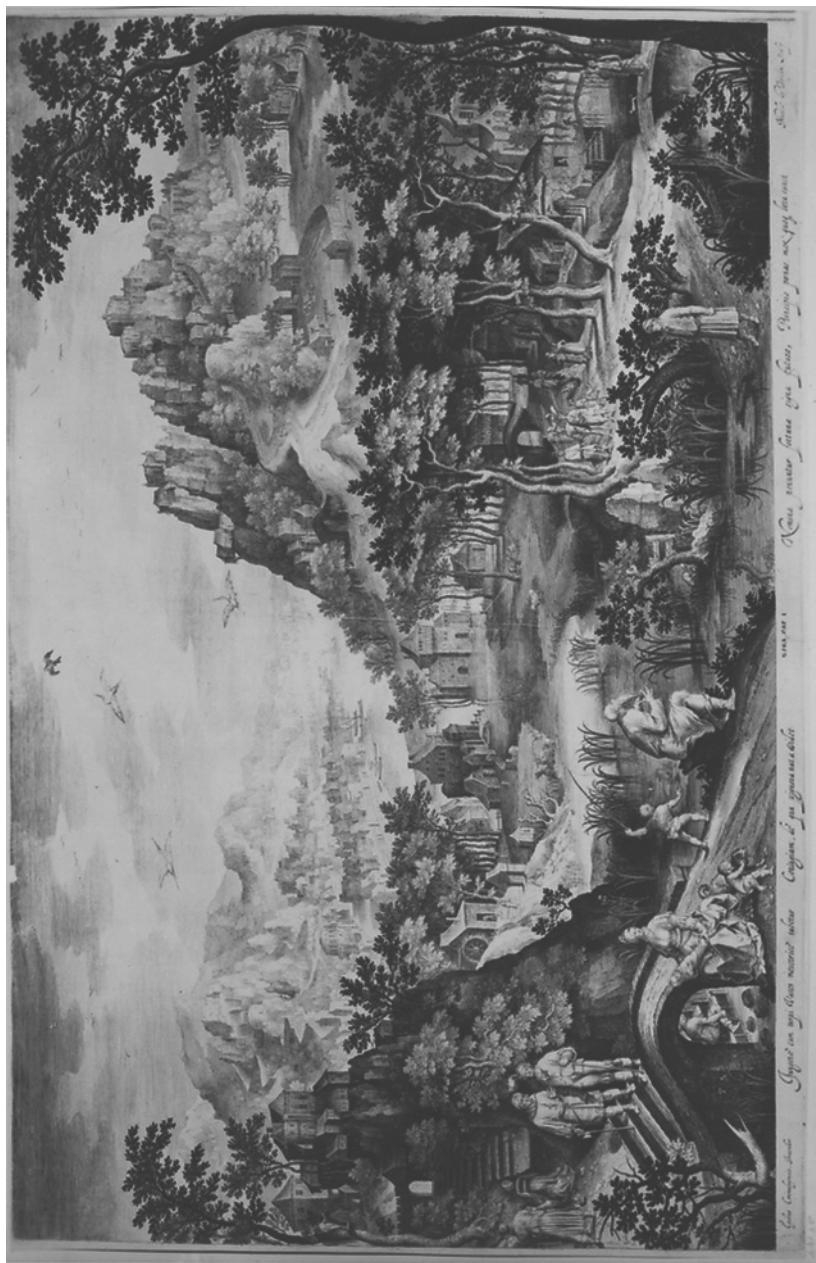


Fig. 1. Gilles van Coninxloo after Nicolas de Bruyn, *Landscape with the Prophet Hosea*. Engraving, Hollstein IV 50.

subject is noteworthy in the way it combines history and landscape. Both history and nature play a significant role in Calvin's teaching on Providence and consequently suggest ways of understanding the role of landscape in Coninxloo's depiction of the Hosea story. In the print, as in the passage from Hosea and in Calvins's commentary, two themes stand out: the corruption of the priests and leaders, and their idolatry. The forested wilderness – Coninxloo's specialty – is a commonplace allusion to the reformed community in exile as well as an integral part of the biblical story. Here, the forested area evokes the biblical wilderness, but it also has a specific reference to the Hosea story since the prophet himself uses wilderness imagery to recall episodes of past exile and to indicate the bleak future of the people. Coninxloo develops the biblical imagery within his forest setting; it is a place of exile but also, potentially, the 'theater of God's glory'.¹⁹

Coninxloo's print is not to be seen as an illustration of Hosea, or even less, of Calvin's commentary, but rather as a tableau whose pictorial details guide the viewer through the biblical story of Hosea from a Reformed perspective, and point to its essential themes. This close reading of the print is predicated on a shared community of interpretation. The works of creation can be spoken of as the 'visible language' of the 'vesture' with which God clothes himself in his manifestation, or the 'mirror' through which he reflects his image.²⁰ But, as Calvin points out more than once, we require the spectacles of the Scriptures to read his revelation or 'the mirror of the word'.²¹

Recognizing the biblical subject and looking through the 'spectacles of Scripture' provides a context of reception for analysing the details of the print with reference to the pertinent pictorial as well as theological traditions. The organization of these elements within the composition leads the knowledgeable viewer through the narrative and enhances the work's significance. Coninxloo's subject certainly addresses the issue of idolatry directly; but seen in the context of Calvin's analogy between a sacramental sign and a prophetic vision or living picture we can appreciate more fully how his work embodies a Calvinist inflection of

¹⁹ Schreiner S.E., *The Theater of His Glory: Nature and the Natural Order in the Thought of John Calvin* (Durham: 1991) 5. See also Calvin John, *Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's "De Clementia"*, eds. F.L. Battles – A.M. Hugo (Leiden: 1969) and Calvin, *Institutes* 58, 68, 72.

²⁰ Calvin, *Institutes* 52–53, 160–161, and 180.

²¹ Calvin, *Institutes* 68, 70, 160–161.

seeing in which earthly reality (whether sacramental or biblical narrative) may provide a testimony, a mirror, or a living picture that points to God, but does not embody or reveal Him. Calvin's argument about reality and the way it is perceived is most explicit in his writings on the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Calvin employs Augustine's reference to the sacrament as *verbum visible*, a visible word, 'because it represents the promises of God as in a picture, and places them in our view in a graphic bodily form'.²² Idolatry is that which would equate the sign and the reality, as all the images we invent are idols of our mind.²³ Within these limits images have their place but not as copies, pictorial representations, or replicas; they are ways of pointing beyond to the unimaginable and undescribable but knowable God.²⁴ The Reformed viewer must confront the confusion of history and seek the glimpse of Providence in nature.

The scriptural associations of forest settings in biblical prints and commentaries also carry over into landscapes without obvious religious subjects. These reflect traditional artistic themes long associated with the *imitatio Christi* and the role of the psalms in personal meditation. Moreover, Calvin was himself familiar with the modern devotion.²⁵ This background might help to explain the centrality of the Psalms to his thought and his use of David as an exemplary model for imitation.²⁶

Of course forests appear in the earlier series of tapestries and print series where landscape and animal scenes were interspersed with biblical narratives. The Wawel and Borromeo tapestry series and several anonymous print bibles now in the Rijksprentenkabinet in Amsterdam all contain examples where context, and perhaps an emblem or inscription, serves to indicate the meaning of a setting.²⁷ One example,

²² Plank K.A., "On Unity and Distinction: An Exploration of the Theology of John Calvin with Respect to the Christian Stance Toward Art", *Calvin Theological Journal* 13 (1978) 30–35; and Kibbey A., *The Interpretation of material shapes in Puritanism* (Cambridge – New York: 1986) 48–60.

²³ Torrance T.F., *The Hermeneutics of John Calvin* (Edinburgh: 1988) 92; Eire, *War Against the Idols* 205–212.

²⁴ Torrance, *The Hermeneutics of John Calvin* 92.

²⁵ Torrance, *The Hermeneutics of John Calvin* 73–80.

²⁶ Pitkin B., "Imitation of David: David as a Paradigm for Faith in Calvin's Exegesis of the Psalms", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 24, 4 (1993) 643–863.

²⁷ Among the print bibles I studied are: *Theatrum Biblicum* (Amsterdam, Nicolaes Visscher: after 1642); *Bilder Bijbel* (Amsterdam, Nicolaes Visscher: after 1648); *Theatrum Biblicum* (Amsterdam, Nicolaes Visscher: 1643); *Bilder Bijbel* (Amsterdam,

a print by Paul Bril from an anonymous *Bilder Bibel*, identified in an inscription in the lower margin as '*de woestijne des Jootssen lants*', represents the biblical wilderness although it contains no specific allusion to a religious theme beyond the forest location, the seventeenth-century inscription, and its placement within a biblical series.²⁸

In the case of Coninxloo, ties with the Frankenthal community suggest the relevance of their values to his pictures. The preponderance of biblical subjects in prints after his work speaks to just such an audience. It seems plausible, for example, that his *Landscape with Snipe Shooting* of 1600 [Fig. 2],²⁹ although lacking an explicit biblical subject might nonetheless have elicited scriptural parallels from an engaged spectator capable of recognizing biblical allusions and identifying them with his own experience. With its stress on personal application, this interpretive approach presupposes a fluid conception of meaning consistent with contemporaneous Calvinist poetry and meditational literature, but also pertinent to those of other confessions.

Although the *Landscape with Snipe Shooting* differs from the *Prophet Hosea and the Prostitute Gomar* in its lack of explicit biblical or didactic content, it does have a clearly defined structure. The main hunt scene takes place in the foreground while the middleground is dominated by roadways, bridges, and travelers. High mountains and a flat river valley spread across the background. Various episodes and motifs are distributed throughout the composition. The events in the fore and middleground are carefully juxtaposed: the hunters with horsemen near a village, the fox and bird with an elaborate manor house, and a living and dead tree with wanderers and a man crossing a bridge. Many of Coninxloo's contemporaries, well-grounded in Scripture, would readily associate the imagery that dominates *Landscape with Snipeshooters* – the forest, the sneaky hunters and their victims, and the wanderers and travelers – with biblical parallels. The figures, usual in woodland scenery, provide appropriate staffage for settings which might connote wilderness and exile. The primary motifs in *Landscape*

Rijksprentenkabinet: no title page); *Theatrum Biblicum, hoc est Historiae Sacrae* (Amsterdam, Nicolas Visscher: 1643), and *Imagines et Figurae Bibliorum* (Jacobus Villanus, n.p.: 1581).

²⁸ Levesque C., *Places of Persuasion: the Journey in Netherlandish Landscape Prints and Print Series* (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University: 1987) 87.

²⁹ Hollstein F.W.H., *Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings, and Woodcuts, ca. 1450–1700*, 4 (Amsterdam: 1951) (169) 221. See also, Papenbrock, *Landschaft des Exils* 71–74; and Levesque, *Places of Persuasion* 86–97.



Fig. 2. Gilles van Coninxloo after Nicolas de Bruyn, *Landscape with a Snipe Shooting*. Engraving, Hollstein IV 168.

with Snipe Shooting evoke imagery drawn from the Psalms, a source which might supply models for the wilderness as well as 'the way', 'the path', 'lost', 'wandering', 'hunter', and 'hunted'. A viewer sensitive to the scriptural significance of the setting and themes would be especially liable to tease out meaning from the potentially significant episodes drawn from commonplace biblical imagery.

Both Calvin and Bèza recommended the Psalms as models for meditation and poetry, a suggestion taken up by many writers that would have had implications for the viewing habits of Coninxloo's audience. In his biblical commentaries, sermons, and meditations, Calvin defines the words 'path', 'road', and 'way' as designating the customary manner or mode of living properly, that is, within God's law.³⁰ In his *Golden Booklet on the True Christian Life*, Calvin describes 'the plan of the scripture as a Christian walk [...] through the labyrinth of the world'.³¹ Scriptural stories, so understood, would always have the journey of life as a subtheme. Calvin's definition provides a trustworthy gauge of the significance such words and images might have for his followers. In Calvin's works the word 'way', indicating the proper manner of living, is enhanced with vivid images of running, stumbling, turning, and walking.

The response to biblical events, 'not as a remote spectator but as one who knows about these things from his own experience' permeates Calvin's commentaries and sermons on the Psalms and actively promotes a model for an engaged spectator. Calvin's intense identification with themes from the Psalms explains the dramatic quality of his descriptive language. For Calvin, 'going through well-known territory' refers not only to the rhetorical commonplaces but also to the reenactment of an individual and particular experience.³² His descriptions of walking, running, and traveling through the wilderness – described variously as mire, devilish woods or dark, dry, and unfruitful places – draws on traditional exegesis, but puts greater emphasis on self-identification. In his sermons, commentaries, and meditations Calvin conducts his reader through the places of the text and advises

³⁰ Calvin John, *Commentaries on the Psalms*, trans. Rev. J. Anderson (Edinburgh: 1865) vol. VI, 3, 250, 260, 290, 416, 549.

³¹ Calvin John, *The Golden Booklet on the True Christian Life*, trans. H.J. Andel (Grand Rapids: 1952) 15.

³² Calvin, *The Golden Booklet* 21.

that one apply personal experience to the Psalms even as he urges the application of lessons learned to one's own spiritual journey.³³

Other Calvinist writers who either translated or commented on the Psalms included such figures as: Théodore Bèza, Clement Marot, Philippe de Mornay, Jan van de Noot, Lucas de Heere, Marnix van St.-Aldegonde, Petrus Dathenus, Gaspar van der Heyden, and Franciscus Junius the Elder. Variations in tone and interpretation among these writers reveal the individuality one would expect in personal prayer and meditation. The Psalms of Petrus Dathenus became important lyrics of the reformed liturgy after 1566, and were adopted as the official version of the Psalms for the Reformed Church in 1578. They were written, moreover, while Dathenus was preacher for the Flemish speaking community in Frankenthal.³⁴ Dathenus' translations and commentaries on the Psalms emphasize Calvinist identification with the Israelites of the Old Testament, and draw parallels between the two peoples – persecution, exile in the wilderness, and the founding of a promised land. In the preface to his translation of the Psalms, Dathenus justifies their use and explains their significance for his contemporaries. Dathenus' strong sense of identification with the Israelites of the Old Testament surfaces in his correspondence, as in this letter of 22 April 1561, to fellow minister, Godfried van Wingen, 'Therefore, my brother, we here are not free from unending difficulties [...] the people whom you lead are still under the Egyptian oppression, while mine have thrown off that yoke of tyranny and are free, they are the people in the wilderness [...].'³⁵

The division of the people into those directly threatened by oppression and those who wander in the wilderness describes a theme that runs through Dathenus' commentaries and that Coninxloo evokes in the *Landscape with Snipe Shooting*. In the engraving, as in commentaries and meditations, our attention moves between the hunters and the hunted and between the hunted and those who traverse the landscape. Coninxloo's choice of a snipe hunt exploits the common lore that snipe are generally attacked from undercover (literally sniped at). This fact stresses the unheroic character of the hunt and places the

³³ For Calvin's use of the rhetorical places and application of traditional rhetoric for his own intense, dramatic, and very descriptive imagery, see Breen Q., *Christianity and Humanism, Studies in the History of Ideas* (Grand Rapids: 1968) 107–129.

³⁴ Ruys T., *Petrus Dathenus* (Utrecht: 1919).

³⁵ Ruys, *Petrus Dathenus* 33.

marksmen in an unfavorable position – lurking in a dark corner.³⁶ The resemblance of the snipe to storks or cranes might also connote piety, a virtue often associated with those birds.³⁷ Hunting is also a recurrent motif in the Psalms and in Calvin's commentaries. His reading of *Psalm 5:8*, 'lead me Lord, in thy righteousness, because my enemies are on the watch; give me a straight path to follow', evokes the perilous situation of the snipe, 'God would lead his servant in safety through the midst of the snares of his enemies, and open up a way to him of escape, even when to all appearance, he was caught and surrounded on every side'.³⁸

Calvin's commentary on *Psalm 11* ('In the Lord I have found my refuge; why do you say to me, "Flee to the mountains like a bird; [...] see how the wicked string their bows") develops this image further. He writes, 'I answer, it is true that he was unsettled like a poor fearful bird which leaps from branch to branch, and was compelled to seek for different bypaths, and to wander from place to place to avoid the snares of his enemies'.³⁹ His description evokes the situation of the bird in the foreground and the wanderers in the middleground of the print.

Coninxloo's print expresses fully the state of affairs suggested in Calvin's commentaries. Across the print from right to left we see the snipe in four circumstances: dead, in danger, taking flight, and soaring safely above the earth. The repetition conveys a narrative sequence. The episode in the lower right corner is a powerful image of persecution, danger, and death; a small boy (a page) stands with a dead bird in his hands as the hunters creep forward to attack their unwary prey. The two birds flying above seem to presage the hope of survival hinted at in Calvin's commentary. The tension between predator and victim is continued in the center foreground where the fox seated at the base of a dead branch watches a bird at the other end. The surrounding brambles and iris' are well-known symbols of persecution.⁴⁰ At the

³⁶ Calvin, *Commentary on the Psalms* 145–148, 162.

³⁷ For examples, see Joachim Camerarius, *Symbolorum et emblematum ex volatilibus et insectis* [...] (n.p.: 1596) nr. 25 ("Nil fulgura terrent"); nr. 42 ("Natura dictante feror").

³⁸ Calvin, *Commentary on the Psalms* 59.

³⁹ Calvin, *Commentary on the Psalms* 161.

⁴⁰ Georgia Montanea, *Monumenta emblematum Christianorum virtutum tum Politicarum, tum Oeconomicarum chorum Centuria una adumbrantia rhythmis gallicis elegantissimis primum conscripta, Figuris aeneis* [...] (Frankfurt, Joannes Carolus Unkelius: 1619) nr. 39 ("Sic amica mea inter"); Joachim Camerarius, *Symbolorum et Emblematum ex re herbaria desumptorum Centuria* [...] (Nuremberg, Johannes

far left, the half living and half dead tree is reminiscent of a common emblem indicating the possibility of spiritual rebirth.⁴¹ Overall, the foreground motifs present a situation of danger which requires vigilance, but which is not hopeless. The prospect of later happiness is reinforced by the text of the Latin inscription in the lower margin:

When the day passes without a cloud, the winds stand still in the air,
and the threatening wave sinks calmly on the dry shore,
And the sun shows the lands to the heavens, and sky to the lands,
and each traveler takes the broad road.⁴²

The first two lines of the inscription, from Propertius III, 10,5–6, a birthday poem to Cynthia, convey the beauties of nature (within time) but within the larger context of the poems and the landscape they also acknowledges its transience and danger.⁴³ The passage from Propertius acknowledges the role of Providence (the order of nature) and so suggests an interpretative accommodation rather than one meaning, an interpretative stance also appropriate to Coninxloo's image.

The Psalms – implicitly about faith, perception, and providence – instruct through their depiction of faith in action. Coninxloo, no less than reformed writers, drew on the Psalms as a book unified by its paedagogic journey; a journey of wisdom learned through suffering. Here, even more explicitly than in literary works, nature (like Scripture) reveals Calvin's complex understanding of providence. Both function as a metonymy for God's creativity, together they were books wherein to read his wondrous works. In Calvin's understanding of Providence, a fragile and often endangered world of nature and history stands in radical dependence on the will of a powerful and sovereign God.⁴⁴ Nature in Coninxloo reveals evidence of life and death as a

Hofmannus – Hubertus Camoxius: 1590) nr. 89 ("Semper inclyla virtus"). See also Boström K., "Das Sprichwort vom Vogelnest", *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 18 (1949) 84–85.

⁴¹ Guillaume de la Perrière, *Le Theatre des Bons Engins, auquel sont contenus cent Emblems moraulx [...]* (Paris, Denys Ianot: 1539) nr. 80 [Way of Life] and Johann Mannich, *Sacra Emblemata [...]* (Nuremberg, Joannes Fredericus Sartorius: 1624) 54 ("Ab Uno Vitaque Morsque – Sirach 11: 5").

⁴² 'Cum sine nube dies transit, stant aere venti,/ Ponat et in sicco molliter unda minas,/ Et caelo terras ostendit et aethera terris/ Sol carpit latum quisque viator iter'. Cf. Propertius III, 10, 5–6: 'Transeat hic sine nube dies, stent aere venti,/ Ponat et in sicco molliter unda minas'. My thanks to Kenneth Rothwell for pointing out this reference and for help with the translation.

⁴³ Propertius, *Elegies*, ed. and trans. G.P. Goold (Cambridge: 1990) 290–293.

⁴⁴ Schreiner, *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* 141, 145–146.

dialectic between revelation and concealment, at once consistent with traditional hunt imagery and with Calvin's view of divine providence.⁴⁵ The appeal of such scenes, though not limited to a Calvinist audience, would have a particular resonance for them.

Coninxloo's painted forest landscapes, all of which postdate his move to Amsterdam in 1595, are beautiful and mysterious. The woodland scenery which plays such an important role in the prints after his work and in the Dresden painting, totally dominates the artist's later works. Trees no longer provide a frame or setting; instead the viewer is immersed in forested woodland and undergrowth with little or no vista. This emphasis on wooded scenery and the low point of view have precedents in tapestry, including a Frankenthal example, but the paintings, through scale and medium, lend both an intensity and opacity to such dense forest scenes.⁴⁶

Coninxloo's painting in Vienna [Fig. 3] is exemplary in this regard. The viewer is provided no access into nor road out of the scene, but rather looks from a low vantage point past the foreground of meticulously rendered vegetation, dead branches, and marshy underwood into a substantial woodland. The firmly grounded trees with prominent roots, thick full girthed trunks, broad leafy branches, and ample canopies of foliage encompass the entire scene. Despite their bulk, the trees are rendered with intricate and accurate botanical detail. Moreover, these meticulously depicted details are not merely descriptive but convey animation. Rich earth tones and green dominate the painting with only a hint of blue sky barely visible through the trees at the edge of the painting. The setting is marked by a play of light and dark; animals lurk in the shadows.

The slightly ominous quality of the Vienna painting is more explicit in other pictures. The late forest scenes in Vaduz [Fig. 4] and Speyer [Fig. 5] include hunts, but these appear as incidental details within the larger scene. The forest marsh, common to all the paintings considered

⁴⁵ Schreiner, *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* 122.

⁴⁶ Papenbrock, *Landschaft des Exils* 170–171; Schilling H., "Religion, Politik, und Kommerz: Die europäische Konfessionsmigration des 16. Jahrhunderts und ihre Folgen", in Hürkey – Bürgy-de Ruijter (eds.), *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf* 31 und 34–35; Bütfering E., "Niederländische Exulanten in Frankenthal: Gründungsgeschichte, Bevölkerungsstruktur und Migrationsverhalten", in Hürkey – Bürgy-de Ruijter (eds.), *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf* 38–41; Duverger E., "Bildwerkerei in Oudenaarde und Frankenthal", in Hürkey – Bürgy-de Ruijter (eds.), *Kunst, Kommerz, Glaubenskampf* 87–95.



Fig. 3. [COL. PL. I] Gilles van Coninxloo, *Forest Landscape*. Oil on panel, 56 × 85 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.



Fig. 4. Gilles van Coninxloo, *Forest Landscape*. Oil on panel, 44 × 63 cm, Vaduz, Leichtenstein Collection.



Fig. 5. Gilles van Coninxloo, *Forest Landscape with Hunters*. Oil on panel 58.5 × 83.5 cm. Speyer, Historisches Museum der Pfalz.

here, is characterized as a place of life and death. Nature in Coninxloo's painted landscapes while lush and verdant is also a place of hidden danger. Dark, somber, and struck through with light, the paintings are carefully delineated yet mysterious. In the Vaduz Forest Scene (1598) large oaks emerge from the marshy land; they are viewed from beyond the broken trees, grasses and irises of the foreground. Human figures appear at the far right, while three hunters, a dog, and a vista with a stone bridge are visible at the left. More prominent is the man with staff (perhaps a shepherd), who stretches under a tree, lit by a patch of light.

These works accord with Karel van Mander's account of Coninxloo's painted forest landscapes. In the *Lives*, he evokes their generative quality as well as their combination of verisimilitude and artistry.⁴⁷ Van Mander's enumeration of what the human eye can see in his work – the sky, various kinds of weather, the sun piercing clouds and sending its rays to the earth, the mountains, and into the valleys; sometimes dark rain clouds; hail snow; all possible variations in green, of trees and fields, when spring smiles and birds sing – underscores that Coninxloo's paintings do not simply describe the landscape but also the processes of nature. This understanding of landscape is not unique to Coninxloo, it runs as a *leit motif* through Van Mander's chapter on landscape and imitation in *Den Grondt*. Coninxloo is distinctive only in the intensity of his vision. In his case, too, the choice of subject – forest (or *sylva*) – and technique are unusually well matched. Coninxloo's forest paintings are grounded in the careful observation of nature's material qualities. This focus on the careful observation of nature and seemingly spontaneous execution can be clarified by – though not fully explained by nor limited to – Coninxloo's Reformed perspective. His attention to what nature reveals and what lies hidden within it, in turn, can be understood in the context of Calvin's assertion of the fundamental division between material and spiritual and his emphasis on the impossibility of approaching the spiritual through the material. Carlos Eire spells out the implications of this view for iconoclasm, and in so doing explains the significance of iconoclasm for the Reformed.⁴⁸ This division has equally significant ramifications for the Reformed view of nature and of art. As a consequence of this

⁴⁷ Van Mander, *Lives* 329–331.

⁴⁸ Eire, *War Against the Idols* 97–200, 203–212.

split, as Eire points out, the divine-human relationship can only be transacted in material terms and so the material world assumes its proper place.⁴⁹ The world, then, is definitely real, but only in a contingent and finite way.⁵⁰ For Calvin the material world operates through its own laws, and these are created, material, and finite.⁵¹ As he says repeatedly in the *Inventory*, only that which one sees or observes is real in this material sphere; if something is contrary to experience, or reason, it must be considered false.⁵²

As Eire points out, such an emphasis on the boundary between the sacred and profane was not unique to Calvin. Melanchthon's important commentary on *Colossians* (1527) contains his clearest statement on this interface between the natural and supernatural realms.⁵³ Melanchthon was eager to establish this separation in order to secure a place for the study of 'natural philosophy'.⁵⁴ In Calvin's understanding of Providence, a fragile and often endangered world of nature and history stands in radical dependence on the will of a powerful and sovereign God.⁵⁵ From his perspective the 'mirror of nature' could function at once as a reflection of God's glory and a place of danger. The combination of verisimilitude and mystery in Coninxloo's painted forests resonate with Calvin's view of Providence in nature as a dialectic between the seen and the hidden.⁵⁶ Coninxloo's painted forest landscapes evoke a tension between revelation and concealment consistent with Calvin's view in which nature provides a glimpse of God's Providence even as it acknowledges the dark and threatening aspect of creation.

Calvin in the *Institutes* emphasizes the need for Providence in a dangerous world as an 'attempt to find an indisputable foundation upon which to affirm a reliable God controls a rational universe'.⁵⁷ His understanding of purposive providential nature is sympathetic to, yet distinguished from Stoic determinism, as well as from the Christian optimism of his contemporaries. The exchange between Calvin

⁴⁹ Eire, *War Against the Idols* 230.

⁵⁰ Eire, *War Against the Idols* 230.

⁵¹ Eire, *War Against the Idols* 230.

⁵² Eire, *War Against the Idols* 230.

⁵³ Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory* 119.

⁵⁴ Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory* 119. See also Kusukawa S., *The Transformation of Natural Philosophy: the Case of Philip Melanchthon* (Cambridge – New York: 1995).

⁵⁵ Schreiner, *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* 92.

⁵⁶ Schreiner, *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* 93–95.

⁵⁷ Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory* 32–33.

and Jacopo Sadeleto, a member of the Oratory of Divine Love and an exponent of Christian optimism, is instructive of the distinctions within providential thinking. For Sadeleto the seeds of learning must be wisely sown – learning or art perfects nature.⁵⁸ The Cardinal stresses the importance of imitation, and he contrasts the life of activity with the life of contemplation.⁵⁹ Sadeleto consistently emphasizes what human effort can achieve and the crucial role of charity.⁶⁰ Calvin ridicules Sadeleto's view that 'love is the first and chief cause of our salvation'.⁶¹ He accuses Sadeleto of having 'too indolent a theology, as is almost always the case with those who have never had an experience in serious struggles of conscience'.⁶²

Coninxloo, who owned a copy of Lipsius' *De Constantia*, appears to have had an interest in neo-Stoicism that can also be understood within the framework of Calvinist thought.⁶³ Stoic materialism and theories of imitation are especially pertinent for understanding his forest scenes. Nature, for the Stoics as for Calvin, was a mirror of God's glory, but also existed as raw material subject to time and transformation. Seneca speaks to this sense of nature. He writes in *Epistle 41*:

If ever you have come upon a grove that is full of
ancient trees which have grown to an unusual height,
shutting out a view of the sky by a veil of pleached
and intertwining branches, then the loftiness of
the forest, the seclusion of the spot, and your marvel
at the thick unbroken shade in the midst of the open
spaces, will prove to you the presence of deity.⁶⁴

Elsewhere he says:

All things human are short lived and perishable,
and fill no part at all of infinite time. This earth
with its cities and peoples, its rivers and the girdle

⁵⁸ M.C. Horowitz, *Seeds of Virtue and Knowledge* (Princeton: 1998) 146; Sadelato J., *Sadelato on Education: a translation of De peuris Recte Instituendis*, ed. and trans. E.T. Campagnac – K. Forbes, (London, 1916) vii–xxiii, 10.

⁵⁹ Horowitz, *Seeds of Virtue* 149; Sadeleto, *Sadelato on Education* 138–141.

⁶⁰ Horowitz, *Seeds of Virtue* 149; Calvin J. – Sadeleto J., *A Reformation Debate: Sadeleto's Letter to the Genevans and Calvin's Reply*, ed. J.C. Olin (New York: 1966) 138, 141.

⁶¹ Horowitz, *Seeds of Virtue* 150; Calvin – Sadeleto, *A Reformation Debate* 69.

⁶² Horowitz, *Seeds of Virtue* 150; Calvin – Sadeleto, *A Reformation Debate* 69.

⁶³ Papenbrock, *Landschaft des Exils* 79–93.

⁶⁴ Seneca, *Letters from a Stoic*, trans. by R. Campbell (London: 1969) 87 (*Epistle* XLI, 5).

of the sea, if measured by the universe, we may count a mere dot: our life, if compared with all time, is relatively even less than a dot; for the compass of eternity is even greater than that of the world, since the world renews itself over and over within the bounds of time.⁶⁵

The emphasis here is not on *carpe diem* but rather the cycles of time and transformation. In the Stoic cosmos heat causes the generation of all things. Thus all things change through a process that is itself eternal. Within this system there is an economy of matter and energy.⁶⁶

Coninxloo's approach to nature in his forest landscape paintings is consistent with the ideas of nature put forth in the neo-Stoic revival during the sixteenth century. More generally, as Van Mander's comments suggest, Coninxloo's work embodies processes of nature and art. It is Coninxloo's sense of life and growth in nature that informs Van Mander's praise of the artist's cleverness and his ability to exploit painting's capacity to create effects of nature – 'anything the eye can see'. This intertwined relationship of painting as a craft and landscape as a subject is reminiscent of Philostratus' conceit that truth in painting consists of painting itself.⁶⁷ It also exemplifies Stoic parallels between art and nature in which art's movement imposed from without mimics nature's inner movement.⁶⁸ Van Mander suggests a similar relationship between art and nature in the analogy he draws between the artist and the carpenter as agents who impart form to matter.⁶⁹

Van Mander's attitude toward the parallel processes of nature and artistic creation is epitomized in his description of painting leaves, where he notes that, 'It is advisable, in a good picture, to obtain through practice a natural and expert manner of painting leaves; because in that lays your power and therefore you must be able to do it'.⁷⁰ Placing emphasis on the process of imitation and the imitation of process, he goes on to say, 'Always one must try many manners – whether after

⁶⁵ Seneca, *Moral Essays*, trans. J.W. Basore (Cambridge: 1932) vol. II, 73–74 (Book VI, "To Marcia on Consolation" XXI, 1–2).

⁶⁶ Cicero, *Nature of the Gods*, trans. H. Rackham (Cambridge: 2000) 147; Colish M., *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: 1985) 24.

⁶⁷ Philostratus, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, ed. and trans. C.P. Jones (Cambridge: 2005) 181.

⁶⁸ Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* 178–79; Watson G., *The Stoic Theory of Knowledge* (Belfast: 1966) 1.

⁶⁹ Van Mander, *Den Grondt* 214.

⁷⁰ Van Mander, *Den Grondt* 214.

nature or after pleasing works of art – to bring forth leaves by means of a flourishing movement of ink wash on colored paper'.⁷¹ Van Mander underscores the importance of movement and process, 'in hopes that in the course of time one achieves his goal; for unlike using the muscles of the body, it is not a skill that can be learned perfectly. Because leaves, hair and light are all spiritual things and can only be conceived and reproduced by the imagination'.⁷²

The criteria Van Mander presents are not novel; Hessel Miedema notes in his commentary how in his *Moralia* Plutarch asserts that color more than line gives the illusion of life.⁷³ Van Mander's subsequent qualification of 'moving and living' suggests painterly qualities but also evokes the distinction between description and animation.⁷⁴ The distinction between light as reflection and light as illumination exemplifies this difference.⁷⁵

In this context, Miedema's translation of *gheest* as *ingenium* is suggestive.⁷⁶ Ernesto Grassi defines *ingenium* as the power which determines growth, existence, and passing away; that is, the becoming of being.⁷⁷ More pertinently, perhaps, he traces the term to Vergil's 'ingenium naturalis', the property of the soil which encourages this generative process.⁷⁸ The power to create is brought down to earth to be cultivated in the meticulous observation of colors and shape of a particular twig, the general crown of foliage or the distinctive texture of the trunks, pale thin birches and furrowed oak bark.⁷⁹ Van Mander again uses generative language, 'and trees that are somewhat withered, begin to grow like his [...].'⁸⁰

Forest subject matter, no less than the emphasis on careful observation, experiment, and labor to convey specific natural effects, links Coninxloo's pictures to natural philosophy and experimentalism. Already in his day the classical *sylva* provided natural philosophers and experimentalists with an appropriate model for writing that drew

⁷¹ Van Mander, *Den Grondt* 214–215.

⁷² Van Mander, *Den Grondt* 214–215.

⁷³ Van Mander, *Den Grondt* 214–217.

⁷⁴ Van Mander, *Den Grondt*, Commentary 591, 556–557.

⁷⁵ Van Mander, *Den Grondt*, Commentary 513–517.

⁷⁶ Van Mander, *Den Grondt*, Commentary 355, 361, 426, 432.

⁷⁷ Grassi E., *Studies in Philosophy and Poetics* (Binghamton: 1988) 68.

⁷⁸ Grassi, *Studies in Philosophy* 68

⁷⁹ Van Mander, *Den Grondt* 216–217.

⁸⁰ Van Mander, *Lives* 330–331: '[...] en de boomen dat hier wat dorre stonden, worden te wassen na de zijne [...]'].

on fact gathering, experiment, and close observation.⁸¹ *Sylva*'s associated meanings of 'raw material' or 'material for construction' evoked both the Greek philosophers *hyle* (the uncombined first bodies of the universe) and the Roman poets more literal sense of timber (the stuff of forests and of building).⁸² Increasingly the word became associated with natural history writing. In Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum*, for example, the name implies a wood of experiments and observations; or a collection of materials, ready procured and laid up for forming particular histories of nature and art.⁸³ The *sylva* most always suggested spontaneous or unplanned growth, wild natural beauty.⁸⁴ The paradox of the *sylva*, though, is that its disorderliness of form is premeditated and arises from a provisional hypothesis of order which remains to be discovered and discerned, an approach to nature that is especially compatible with a Calvinist view of Providence and exemplified in the work of Gillis van Coninxloo.

⁸¹ Bruyn F. de, "The Classical Sylva and the Generic Development of Nature Writing in Seventeenth-Century England", *New Literary History* 32 (2001) 357–362.

⁸² Newmyer, *The Sylvae of Statius* 4.

⁸³ Stephens J., *Francis Bacon and the Style of Science* (Chicago: 1975) 8–9, 27, 110–111; McKnight S.A., *The Religious Foundations of Francis Bacon's Thought* (Columbia, Missouri: 2006) 62–64.

⁸⁴ Newmyer, *The Sylvae of Statius* 366.

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II. THE AUTHORITY OF VISUAL PARATEXTS

THE AUTHOR'S PORTRAIT AS READER'S GUIDANCE: THE CASE OF FRANCIS PETRARCH

Karl A.E. Enenkel

The portrait seems to convey one of the most important paradigms of Renaissance culture. This goes for the pictorial genre as a whole, as well as for singular portraits of Renaissance individuals. The portraits of Leon Battista Alberti, the condottiere Bartolomeo Colleoni, Cosimo and Lorenzo de' Medici, Federico da Montefeltro and others seem to offer us immediate access to the very core of Renaissance culture, which ever since Burckhardt's *Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* has been connected with the 'discovery of the individual' and the cult of personality.¹ While Burckhardt himself modestly speaks of 'ein Versuch', it is fascinating to see that for later scholars, his construction of the 'Renaissance individual' represents something like a scholarly dogma with a high degree of certainty. For example, the *Lexikon der Renaissance* (2000) explains the Renaissance portrait essentially by reference to the notion of individuality ('Individualität'): 'Die Darstellung der menschlichen Individualität, der *Einmaligkeit* und *Einzigartigkeit* von Personen aus der Welt der Politik und der Religion, der Kunst und der Gelehrsamkeit ist ein mit der Renaissance untrennbar verbundener Vorgang [...]. Das Interesse wendet sich energisch dem einzelnen zu'.² In artistic, literary and historical terms, the uniqueness of the Renaissance seems to be closely related to the interest of Renaissance people in the 'individual'. 'Individualism' is a quality of attitude or behaviour attributed to persons living during the Renaissance. It denotes an increasing self-awareness and pursuit of self-interest in presumed contrast to a prior prevalence of various sorts of group-consciousness.³ Scholars who subscribe to the *congetto* of Renaissance individuality

¹ Burckhardt Jacob, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien. Ein Versuch*, durchgesehen von W. Goetz (urspr. 1860; 10. Aufl. Stuttgart: 1976), section II "Entwicklung des Individuums" 121–157, esp. "Die Vollendung der Persönlichkeit" 128ff.

² Münkler H. – Münkler M., *Lexikon der Renaissance* (Munich: 2000) 319 (italics mine).

³ Grendler P.F. et alii (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* (New York: 1999) vol. III, 259 (lemma "Individualism").

are inclined to think that this remarkable phenomenon could have happened only during a comparatively short historical period – the Renaissance – a true highlight of civilisation, in marked difference to the culture of the Middle Ages.⁴ In my paper, I want to discuss a category of portraits that – although it is rooted in a long medieval tradition⁵ – seems to be closely related to the notion of ‘Renaissance individuality’: the author’s portrait. For my case-study, I have chosen to focus on a writer who was always connected with the cult of Renaissance individualism,⁶ a writer who was even hailed as ‘the first modern man’:⁷ Francis Petrarch. Petrarch deserves special attention not only because he is one of the icons of ‘Renaissance individualism’, but also

⁴ Münkler – Münkler, *Lexikon der Renaissance* 319: ‘Aber als Individuum vermag sich der Dargestellte nur zu behaupten, wenn und solange er gegenüber den Zeichen seines Berufes, seines Standes und seiner Funktion in seiner Besonderheit und Einmaligkeit die Oberhand behält. *Das ist aber nur für eine begrenzte Zeit der Fall gewesen*; 322: ‘Das Porträt als Darstellung von Individualität hat nicht zu den Zielen und Absichten der mittelalterlichen Kunst gehört [...]. Dagegen wird im 15. Jahrhundert in der europäischen Kunst der Weg zum *Individualporträt* eingeschlagen [...]’ (italics mine).

⁵ Especially useful are Meier-Staubach Ch., ‘Ecce autor. Beiträge zur Ikonographie literarischer Urheberschaft im Mittelalter’, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 34 (2000) 338–392, Wenzel H., ‘Autorbilder. Zur Ausdifferenzierung von Autorenfunktionen in mittelalterlichen Miniaturen’, in: Andersen E. – Haustein J. – Simon A. – Strohschneider P. (eds.), *Autor und Autorschaft im Mittelalter* (Meissen: 1995) 1–28, Peters U., ‘Werkauftrag und Buchübergabe. Textentstehungsgeschichten in Autorbildern volkssprachiger Handschriften des 12. bis 15. Jahrhunderts’, in: Kapfhammer G. – Löhr W.-D. – Nitsche B., *Autorbilder. Zur Medialität literarischer Kommunikation in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Münster: 2007) (Rhema 2) 25–62; and Peters U., ‘Autorbilder in volkssprachigen Handschriften des Mittelalters. Eine Problemskizze’, *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 119 (2000) 321–368; cf. Also Prochno J., *Das Schreiber- und Dedikationsbild in der deutschen Buchmalerei bis zum Ende des 11. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: 1929); Meier Ch., ‘Illustration und Textcorpus. Zu kommunikations- und ordnungsfunktionalen Aspekten der Bilder in den mittelalterlichen Enzyklopädiehandschriften’, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 31 (1997) 1–31. Furthermore, there is a rich variety of studies on certain literary genres of medieval literature and of individual medieval authors. For a detailed bibliography on these aspects cf. Kapfhammer G. – Löhr W.D. – Nitsche B., ‘Einleitung’, in idem, *Autorbilder* 9–24.

⁶ Grendler et alii (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance*, vol. III, 260, lemma ‘Individualism’ (Ch. Trinkaus): ‘The Renaissance breakthrough toward individualism came in the third quarter of the fourteenth century with Petrarch’s emphatic concern with the course of life of individuals’. Cf. Trinkaus Ch., *The poet as Philosopher: Petrarch and the Formation of Renaissance Consciousness* (New Haven, Conn.: 1979).

⁷ Already Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance* 277: ‘[...] Petrarca, einer der frühesten völlig modernen Menschen’ (there, with respect to his aesthetic appreciation of landscape). This has become a dogma, endlessly repeated in encyclopaedias, and occurring even in book titles from 1898 on. Cf. Robinson J.H. (ed.), *Francis Petrarch. The First Modern Scholar and Man of Letters* (London: 1898; New York: 1909).

because we possess a large number of author's portraits of the man; indeed, he was one of the most frequently depicted persons of early modern culture.

In my contribution, however, I want to look at Petrarch's author's portraits from a different angle. I will not focus here on the portraits' physical likeness or authentic individual expression, but in the first place regard them as *texts*, or, more precisely, as paratexts, elements which are closely connected, if not intertwined with the main text of literary and scholarly works. I think that in the period 1350–1650, the texts that precede and surround the main text are of crucial importance for understanding and interpreting literary works and that, therefore, they require careful analysis. This goes, of course, not only for the author's portrait but for a broad spectrum of texts: title inscriptions, tables of contents, letters of dedication, prefaces, indices, poems in praise of the author, testimonia, biographies, accompanying letters of various people and so on.⁸ I want to query what the paratext of an author's portrait tells us about the usage of the text it is attached to. In doing so, I am following more recent attempts to interpret authors' portraits by focusing on the functions of a text's illustrations, on the part they play in the process of receiving and transmitting knowledge and on their symbolic meaning.⁹ As will soon become evident, I come to conclusions different from those to be found in important studies

⁸ Currently, I am preparing a monograph on *Die Stiftung von Autorschaft in der neulateinischen Literatur (ca. 1350-ca. 1650). Zur autorisierten und wissensvermittelnden Funktion von Widmungen, Vorworttexten, Autorbildern und anderen paratextuellen Figuren*, which originated in the international interdisciplinary research group *Discourses of Self-Reflexion and Meditation in Literature and the Arts, 1300–1600*, that I coordinated in 2008–2009 at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies (NIAS). Cf. Enenkel K. – Melion W. (eds.), *Meditatio – Refashioning the Self. Theory and Practice in Late Medieval and Early Modern Intellectual Culture* (Leiden – Boston: 2011) (Intersections. Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 17); Enenkel K., "Meditative Frames as Reader's Guidance in Neo-Latin Texts", in *ibidem* 27–44.

⁹ Cf., *inter alia*, the studies quoted in n. 5. I am also indebted to Trapp J.B., "The Iconography of Petrarch in the Age of Humanism", in *idem, Studies on Petrarch and his Influence* (London: 2003) 1–117, although less from a methodological point of view. Unfortunately, I could not use the unpublished dissertation of Löhr W.D., *Lesezeichen. Francesco Petrarca und das Dichterbild bis zum Beginn der Renaissance* (Ph.D. Berlin: 2003). Trapp (2003) still organizes his discussion of the 'iconography of Petrarch' along the lines of the well known "authenticity discourse"; cf. Trapp, "Iconography of Petrarch" 5 (ff.) 'the authentic type' [of Petrarch's portrait].

on Petrarch's portraits, by De Nolhac, Mardersteig, and Trapp, among others.¹⁰

I would like to start with two author's portraits of Petrarch which puzzled me for various reasons. The first, generally considered to be "the" authentic portrait of Petrarch, constitutes the single most famous example of the discourse of authenticity that has to a large extent dominated the discussion of Petrarch's portraits: it is the portrait in the Paris manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale, cod. Lat. 6069 F, containing the treatise *De viris illustribus* [Fig. 1]. The portrait is generally ascribed to the North Italian artist Altichiero who painted two other portraits of Petrarch in the Oratorio di San Giorgio, next to the Basilica di Santo in Padua. According to Giovanni Mardersteig, who wrote a study on Petrarch's portraits¹¹, this drawing is 'without any doubt' the most authentic portrait of Petrarch: 'è indubbiamente la più [...] fedele raffigurazione del poeta'.¹² Because of the high value he attaches to it as a physical likeness, he avers that the portrait must have been made by a master 'con occhio acuto', 'with a sharp eye', and, therefore, he concurs that it must be by Altichiero. Probably for the same reasons, J.B. Trapp, author of the "Iconography of Petrarch in the Age of Humanism", considers the attribution to Altichiero convincing.¹³ Although this attribution is a *communis opinio*n in the scholarly literature, I am afraid that it remains almost impossible to prove that this artist was the draughtsman.¹⁴ Mardersteig, in ascribing to the artist 'a sharp eye', seems remarkably enough to infer that the

¹⁰ de Nolhac P., "L'iconographie de Pétrarque", in idem, *Pétrarque et l'humanisme* (1892; nouvelle édition, Paris: 1909) vol. II 245–257; Mardersteig G., "I ritratti del Petrarca e die suoi amici di Padova", *Italia medioevale ed umanistica* 17 (1974) 251–280; Trapp, "Iconography of Petrarch".

¹¹ Mardersteig, "I ritratti del Petrarca"; for Altichiero cf. Bobisut D. – Gumiero Salomoni L., *Altichiero da Zevio* (Padua: 2002); Plant M., "Portraits and Politics in Late Trecento Padua: Altichiero's Frescoes in the S. Felice Chapel, S. Antonio", *Art Bulletin* 63, 3 (1981); Biaggio L. – Colalucci G. – Bortoletti D., *Altichiero da Zevio nell'Oratorio di San Giorgio. Il restauro degli affreschi* (Padua – Rome: 1999); D'Arcais F., "La decorazione della Capella di San Giacomo", and idem, "La decorazione della Capella di San Giorgio", in *Le pitture del Santo a Padova* (Vicenza: 1984) 15–62; Schubring P., *Altichiero und seine Schule* (Leipzig: 1898); Pettenella P., *Altichiero e la pittura Veronese de trecento* (Verona: 1961); and, of course, most complete, Mellini G.L., *Altichiero e Jacopo Avanzi* (Milano: 1965).

¹² Ibidem 263.

¹³ Trapp, "The Iconography of Petrarch" 5.

¹⁴ For example, the Altichiero scholar Mellini has embraced it; cf. Mellini, *Altichiero*, Fig. 285.



Fig. 1. Portrait of Petrarch. Drawing. Manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, cod. Lat. 6069 F (containing the treatise *De viris illustribus*), fol. Av.

portrait was drawn from life. Trapp, who looked at Petrarch's portraits in terms of iconography, tried to single out certain types: he characterised the presumed Altichiero-portrait as the father of what he calls the 'authentic type'.¹⁵ In truth, the Paris portrait has a long scholarly history within the discourse of authenticity. Pierre de Nolhac had already attributed to it the highest authenticity and an 'exceptional authority'.¹⁶ Its authenticity, he claims, is guaranteed by that fact that it was Petrarch's close friend and *exécuteur testamentaire* Lombardo della Seta who ordered the Paris manuscript, and thus, its status is grounded in the intimate relationship between the portrayed and his friend.¹⁷ This is the reason why – according to De Nolhac – one can be sure that the portrait is trustworthy and realistic, and one may even suppose that it was *drawn from life*. If the artist did not draw the portrait from life, De Nolhac argues, he must at least have known some very realistic and recent portraits of the mature Petrarch.¹⁸ Thus, if not the portrait itself, then at least its ancestor must have been painted from life. In a telling detail, Pierre de Nolhac underlines the authenticity of the portrait by linking it to Petrarch's verbal self-portrait in his *Epistola Posteritati*,¹⁹ in which the poet characterizes himself as having 'a vivid complexion somewhere between light and dark, with lively eyes, and for a long time very keen vision, which unexpectedly abandoned me after the sixtieth year [...].'²⁰ De Nolhac's link with this passage, however, is not very convincing. First of all, one keep in mind that Petrarch's "self-portrait" is not purely descriptive, but much more a rhetorical reaction to Boccaccio's ideal portrait in his hagiographical

¹⁵ Trapp's 'authentic type', however, is somewhat problematic, since he lists under this header very different portraits from different genres, including mural paintings.

¹⁶ de Nolhac, "L'iconographie de Pétrarque" 250: 'Le portrait que je croix le plus sérieux, et d'une indiscutable authenticité, a été [...] exécuté à Padoue et dans des conditions qui lui donne, semble-t-il, une autorité exceptionnelle'.

¹⁷ Ibidem 253: 'Ce portrait offre, par sa provenance même, des garanties assez rares pour les monuments de l'ancienne iconographie'.

¹⁸ Ibidem 254: 'Si le peintre n'a pas travaillé d'après nature, il a connu, du moins, parmi les portraits de la maturité du poète, celui qu'on jugeait le plus ressemblant et il l'a fidèlement reproduit'.

¹⁹ Ibidem.

²⁰ *Epistola posteritati* 4. See my edition in see Enenkel K. – de Jong-Crane B. – Liebregts P. (eds.), *Modelling the Individual. Biography and Portrait in the Renaissance. With a Critical Edition of Petrarch's Letter to Posterity* (Amsterdam – Atlanta: 1998) 258–259: 'colore vivido inter candidum et subnigrum, vivacibus oculis et visu per longum tempus acerrimo, qui preter spem supra sexagesimum annum me destituit'.

*Life of Petrarch.*²¹ In the autobiographical letter, Petrarch in fact puts glasses on his nose because his sharp eyes have dulled.²² As a whole, his literary “self-portrait” resembles more an ironical commentary than a “trustworthy” description. Furthermore, the Paris portrait does not after all render the complexion of Petrarch’s skin. It is interesting to see that in other scholarly comments as well, the Paris portrait is closely linked with Petrarch’s verbal “self-portrait” or is treated as if it were a true *self-portrait* of the poet who is known to have made little drawings.²³ That authenticity discourse implicitly evaluates self-portraits as the most authentic portraits, is especially remarkable in the case of a scholar who was himself by no means a skilful painter. By way of comparison, one may look at Erasmus’s self-portrait in his scholia to the Letters of Saint Jerome (1515) [Fig. 2].²⁴ How authentically does a portrait like this, though certainly *manu ipsius*, render the writer’s face? The Paris drawing, of course, cannot possibly be a self-portrait, since the manuscript was written either in December of 1378 or January 1379, more than four years after the death of the poet, and nor for the same reasons can it have been drawn from life.

The Paris drawing – although the *communis opinio* considers it the most authentic portrait – represents a remarkable if not strange portrait type. First of all, it does not correspond to other authors’ portraits, which are generally small paintings incorporated into initials, depicting an author in the process of writing (e.g., at a desk), reading from his work, or presenting his book to a dedicatee (mostly a prince

²¹ For this aspect, see Enenkel K., “Gesichter wie Kleider. Die Manipulation des Äussernen durch Intertextualität”, in idem, *Die Erfindung des Menschen. Die Autobiographik des frühneuzeitlichen Humanismus von Petrarca bis Lipsius* (Berlin – New York: 2008) 102–105, and idem, “Modelling the Humanist: Petrarch’s *Letter to Postterity* and Boccaccio’s Biography of the Poet Laureate”, in: Enenkel – de Jong-Crane – Liebrechts (eds.), *Modelling the Individual* (11–49) esp. 37–43.

²² The passage continues as follows: ‘so that, to my disgust, I had to resort to glasses’ (‘ut indignanti michi ad ocularium confugiendum esset auxilium’), ed. Enenkel, *ibidem*.

²³ For example, Petrarch’s sketch of the Vaucluse in his Pliny, manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Lat. 6802, fol. 143v, with the autograph “caption”: ‘Transalpina solitudo mea iocundissima’. Cf. Contini G., “Petrarca e le arti figurative”, in Bernardo A.S. (ed.), *Petrarch, Citizen of the World* (Washington: 1974) 122 and 124–129; Chiavenda, “Die Zeichnungen Petrarcas”, *Archivum Romanicum* 17 (1933) 1–61; Masséna V. Prince d’Essling – Müntz E., *Pétrarque: ses études d’arts, son influence sur les artistes, ses portraits et ceux de Laure. L’illustration des ses écrits* (Paris: 1902).

²⁴ *Scholia Erasmi in D. Hieronymi epistolae*, Manuscript Basel, Universitätsbibliothek Basel, HS. A.IX.56, fol. 226r.

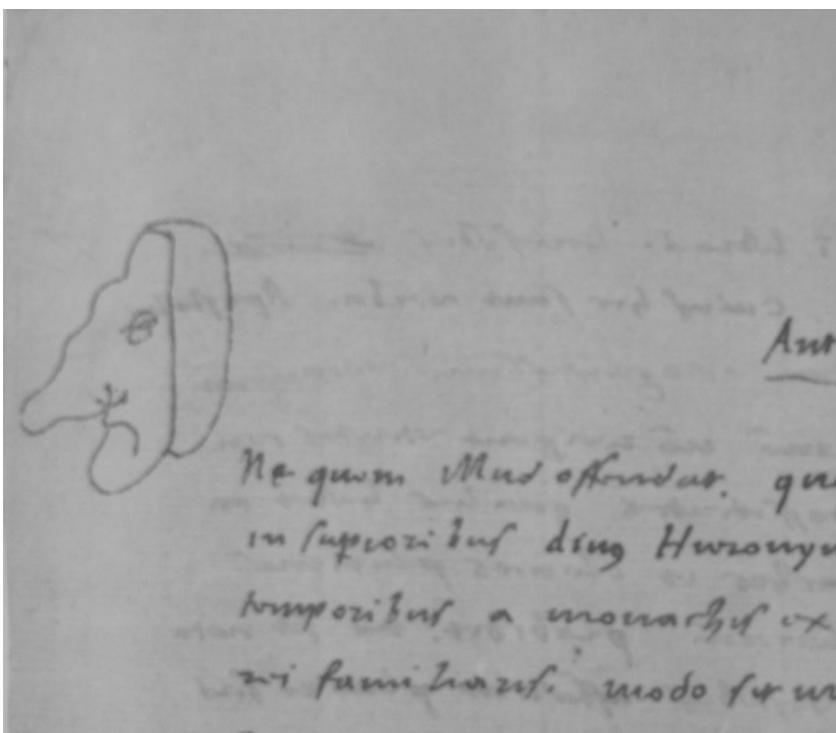


Fig. 2. Erasmus, 'Self-portrait', from: *Scholia Erasmi in D. Hieronymi epistolas*, Manuscript Basel, Universitätsbibliothek Basel, HS. A.IX.56, fol. 226r.

or a high cleric), or portrays the author as teacher.²⁵ The Paris portrait is obviously about something else: it does not give the impression of vividness and liveliness, as claimed by various scholars, but instead signals remoteness. Moreover, the author seems to resemble a statue, elevated above quotidian life. This disturbing effect is even reinforced by the realistic impression which the artist obviously wanted to attain. How might one explain this contradictory mixture of remoteness and realism? How does it combine with the intended function of the written word? We will come back to this later on.

My second example is the introductory miniature in a Florentine manuscript containing Petrarch's *Canzoniere* [Fig. 3], dating from ca. 1440. As Trapp interpreted it, the painting shows Petrarch receiving his admirers 'en plein air' in his favourite place for writing, the famous valley of the Vaucluse near Avignon, where the poet owned a

²⁵ Cf. Meier, "Ecce autor" 347–351 ("Der Autor als Schreiber seines Werkes"); 353–355 ("Der Autor mit seinem Buch oder seinen Lehrinhalten"); 372–378 ("Die Dedikation des Werkes"); 383–385 ("Der Autor als Lehrer").



Fig. 3. Author's portrait of Petrarch (ca. 1440). Illumination. Manuscript Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, MS. Strozzi 172, fol. 1r.

small country house.²⁶ The painting, although it displays the symbolic *cathedra*,²⁷ seems to bear elements characteristic of a kind of genre scene. It is easy to imagine on this basis how the poet might have received visitors, and if one reads his Latin letters one does indeed find a couple of descriptions of such visits. Also, it seems justified to identify the landscape with the Vaucluse because of the river gushing forth from the mountain scenery. This must refer to the Fontaine de Vaucluse, frequently mentioned by Petrarch in his letters and elsewhere, which was very close to the spot where the poet's house was situated.

However, this seemingly realistic author's portrait comprises a couple of disturbing features. First of all, the young woman at the head of the visitors is Laura, Petrarch's beloved lady, unmistakably characterised by the twig of laurels. Laura, a married woman, had never actually visited Petrarch in the Vaucluse. Second, the poet 'receives' his visitors on a strange throne adorned with architectonic details typical of the Trecento. It is of course hardly plausible that Petrarch would have considered it appropriate to receive his guests like this. Third, on the right side of his throne, lies Petrarch's cat. This does not fit with the Vaucluse, where Petrarch kept a large hunting dog, a present from his Maecenas, Cardinal Giovanni Colonna – but no cat. The cat may point to Petrarch's stay in Padua, more precisely to his country house in Arquà, where the cat loved to sit in his study. After Petrarch's death, the cat was embalmed and functioned – although it looked rather miserable after losing all its hair – as a kind of relic for the intellectuals who made a pilgrimage to the poet's house in the Euganean hills. In Tomasini's guide, the *Petracha redivus*, for example, the cat is described as if it were a monument, on a marble block carved with antique Roman capitals: PETRARCHAE MVRILEGA [Fig. 4].²⁸ These several features cause me to wonder whether we should interpret this author's portrait in a different manner.

Let us then take a closer look at this author's portrait. I think that it has little to do with a kind of genre scene but is instead meant to

²⁶ Trapp, "The Iconography of Petrarch" 11.

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Iacobus Philippus Tomasinus, *Petracha Redivivus* [...] (Padua, Paolo Frambotta: 1640) 130 (illustration); 125: 'In istac Francisci Petrarchae Domo verenda supersunt vetustate magna cura a fundi hero religiose conservata ex illius suburbana supellec-tili, [...] et supra ostium cubiculi apud Mausoleum in loculum est FELIS integer servata, quam Poeta in deliciis habuit'.

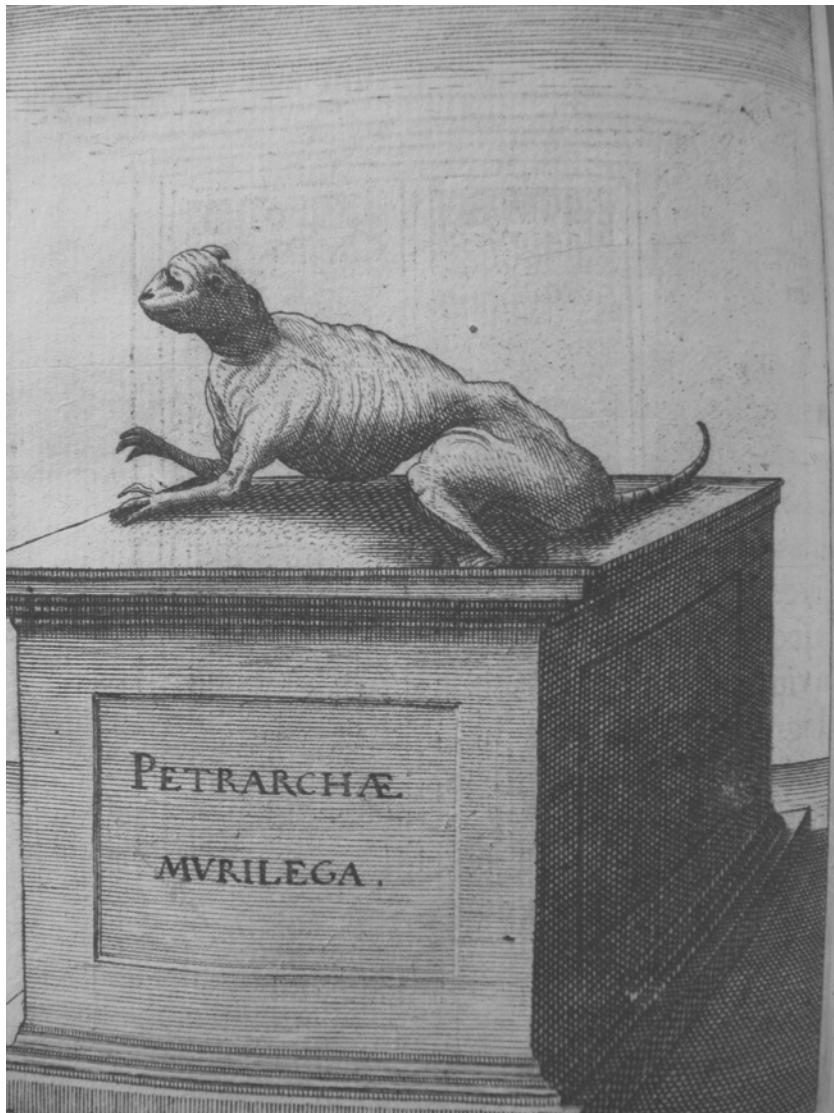


Fig. 4. Petrarch's cat. From: Iacobus Philippus Tomasinus, *Petracha Redivivus* [...] (Padua, Paolo Frambotta: 1640) 130. Private collection. © Photo: Karl Enenkel.

function primarily as a symbolic representation that offers guidance to the reader. More precisely, the image sets out the relationship between the author and his readers. The group of people to the right (8 persons plus 1) represents the intended readership of the book that the author holds in his left hand. He presents his book to his audience with a demonstrative gesture expressive of authority. The gesture seems to tell the audience: this is an important book. If you use it in an appropriate manner, you will benefit from it. This message is conveyed to the audience even more clearly by the kind of throne on which the author sits. It represents a medieval *cathedra*, the chair on which mediaeval university professors sat when teaching. The chair represents the author as an authority of learning and a teacher of wisdom.

In order to understand this discourse, it is illustrative to compare Petrarch's image with those of the mediaeval university professor and teacher of wisdom par excellence, Thomas Aquinas.²⁹ For example in the beautiful fresco by Andrea Bonaiuto in the Dominican Chiostro Verde (Spagnoli Chapel) of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, painted in 1365–1367, Thomas is depicted as the *doctor egregius* sitting on a *cathedra* and holding a book forth to his audience [Fig. 5].³⁰ The image presents him as a teacher of wisdom and virtue. His works are seen to contain the four *virtutes cardinales*, among other virtues, as the personifications above indicate. The text of the open book – a few lines from the *Book of Wisdom* – authorises Thomas as a teacher: 'I asked for sense, and it was given to me. I called for the spirit of wisdom, and it was given to me, and I explained it to the kingdoms and the powerful [...]'³¹ Thomas teaches us wisdom, while at his feet

²⁹ For portraits of Thomas Aquinas, cf. Winckel A.W. van, S. *Thomas van Aquino. Bijdragen over zijn tijd, zijn leer en zijn verheerlijking door de kunst* (Hilversum: 1927).

³⁰ For Andrea Bonaiuto's frescoes cf., among others, Gardner J., "Andrea di Bonaiuto and the Chapterhouse Frescoes in S. Maria Novella", *Art History* 2 (1979) 107–138; idem, *Patrons, Painters and Saints* (London: 1993); Offner R. – Steinweg K., *A Critical and Historical Corpus of Florentine Painting IV*, 6 (Locust Valley, N.J.: 1979); Tripps J., *Tendencies of Gothic in Florence. Andrea Bonaiuti* (Florence: 1996); Polzer, J., "Andrea di Bonaiuto's 'Via Veritatis' and Dominican Thought in Late Medieval Italy", *Art Bulletin* 77, 2 (1995) 262–289; Gregori M. (ed.), *Mural Painting in Italy. The Late 13th to the Early 15th Centuries* (Turino: 1995) 58–59; Lunardi R., *Arte e storia in Santa Maria Novella* (Florence: 1983).

³¹ *Sap.* VIII, 7: 'Optavi et datus est mihi sensus et invocavi et venit in me spiritus SAPIENTIAE et praeposui illam regnis et sedibus'. This was an important text, which was indissolubly connected with Thomas Aquinas's image. These were the first words of the scriptural lectio read on the feast of Saint Thomas.



Fig. 5. [COL. PL. II] Andrea Bonaiuto, Thomas Aquinas as doctor egregius (painted in 1365–1367). Fresco in the Chiostro Verde (Spagnoli Chapel) of Santa Maria Novella in Florence.

are located the teachers of heresy he had conquered: Arius, Averroes and Sabellius. The *inventio* of the fresco probably goes back to the prior of the Dominican monastery of S. Maria Novella, Fra Zanobi de' Guasconi, who was professor of theology at the University of Florence until his death in 1366. The iconography of Thomas as a teacher of truth and wisdom was widespread, and it was also used in Aquinas' writings to portray the author, at least until the beginning of the sixteenth century. The title-page illustration that accompanies Thomas' commentaries on Aristotle, the *Commentaria in libros perihermeneias et posteriorum Aristotilis et eiusdem fallaciarum opus*, an incunabula printed in Venice by Oddone Luna in 1496, may serve as an example [Fig. 6]. The author Aquinas is seated on a cathedra and teaches an audience consisting of two times eight pupils, both lay and clerical. Under Aquinas's cathedra, we again find Averroes, Aristotle's heretical interpreter. I am inclined to interpret the image as a source of guidance for the reader: the book on the lectern of the *cathedra* of course represents the author's *Commentaria*. The intended reader is supposed to discern in Aquinas' exegetical commentary the authoritative and truthful interpretation of Aristotle, and to accept, as scholastic pupils would have done, the '*sententia magistri*' as decisive.

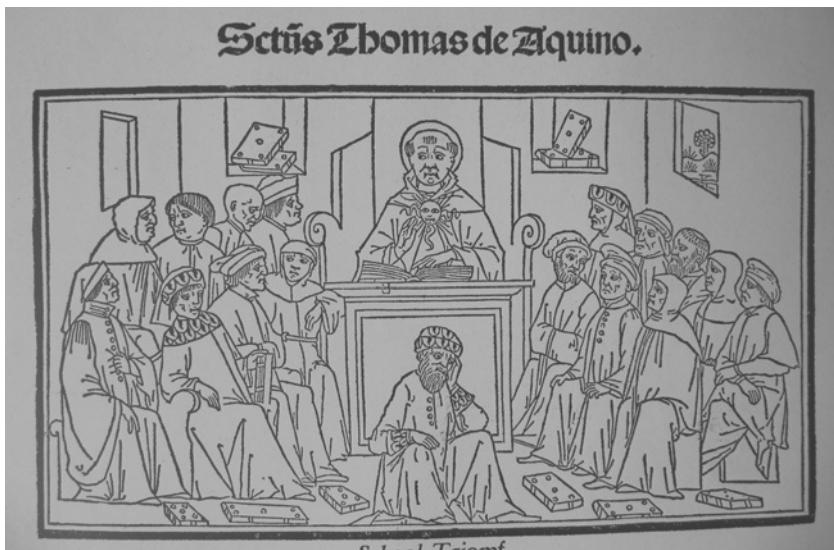


Fig. 6. Author's portrait of Thomas Aquinas. Title-page to Thomas Aquinas, *Commentaria in libros perihermeneias et posteriorum Aristotilis et eiusdem fallaciarum opus* (Venice, Oddone Luna: 1496).

There are other author's portraits of Petrarch that display features similar to those in the iconography of Aquinas. An important example is a Milanese manuscript of ca. 1400, that includes Petrarch's *De remediis utriusque fortune*.³² The author's portrait at the beginning of the work [Fig. 7] resembles that of Thomas by Andrea Bonaiuto. Petrarch sits on a cathedra, thus identifying himself as an authoritative teacher of wisdom. With his left hand, he presents an open book to the reader: this is his work *De remediis*. To his left and right, the image depicts Petrarch's audience: two times five persons, clerics and laymen, both men and women. To the left, the first three persons are clerics: the pope, a nun and a monk; the fourth is a minstrel, the fifth a jester with a monkey and birds. To the right, the audience consists exclusively of lay people: a king, a knight, a nobleman, a noble lady and a shepherd. The image functions as a very distinctive guide to the reader, who is invited to receive the work as an authoritative source of Christian moral philosophy. The author is represented as a cleric wearing the dark robe of a canon, and also as a scholastic teacher: as such, he will put in a certain order the different opinions pertaining to a philosophical topic, and he will make a final decision regarding which of these contains the authoritative truth.

This is an especially interesting case of guidance to reader, given the structure of *De remediis*: the work is organised as an inner dialogue between four emotions and the *ratio*. Technically speaking, the author Petrarch does not himself claim to have a voice in the work, except of course in the prologue. Modern interpretations of dialogues insist that it would be a "biographic fallacy" to identify the author's opinions with one (or more) of the dialogue's participants, but remarkably enough, the author's portrait guides the reader to reach precisely this conclusion: it invites the reader firstly to construe Petrarch's *De remediis* as a dialogue between a *teacher* and a *pupil*, and secondly to identify one of the dialogue's participants – Ratio – with Petrarch. The reader should not interpret Ratio's words as one particular opinion or option, but as the authoritative truth. The guidance on offer is also remarkable with respect to the content of the work: the arguments Ratio (or Petrarch) unfolds are largely taken from antique Stoic

³² Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense, MS AD XIII 30. Trapp, *Studies on Petrarch and his Influence* 123 (Fig. 3); Bollati M., in Boskovits M., *Miniature a Brera 1100–1422. Manoscritti della Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense e da collezioni private* (Milano: 1997) 230–233.

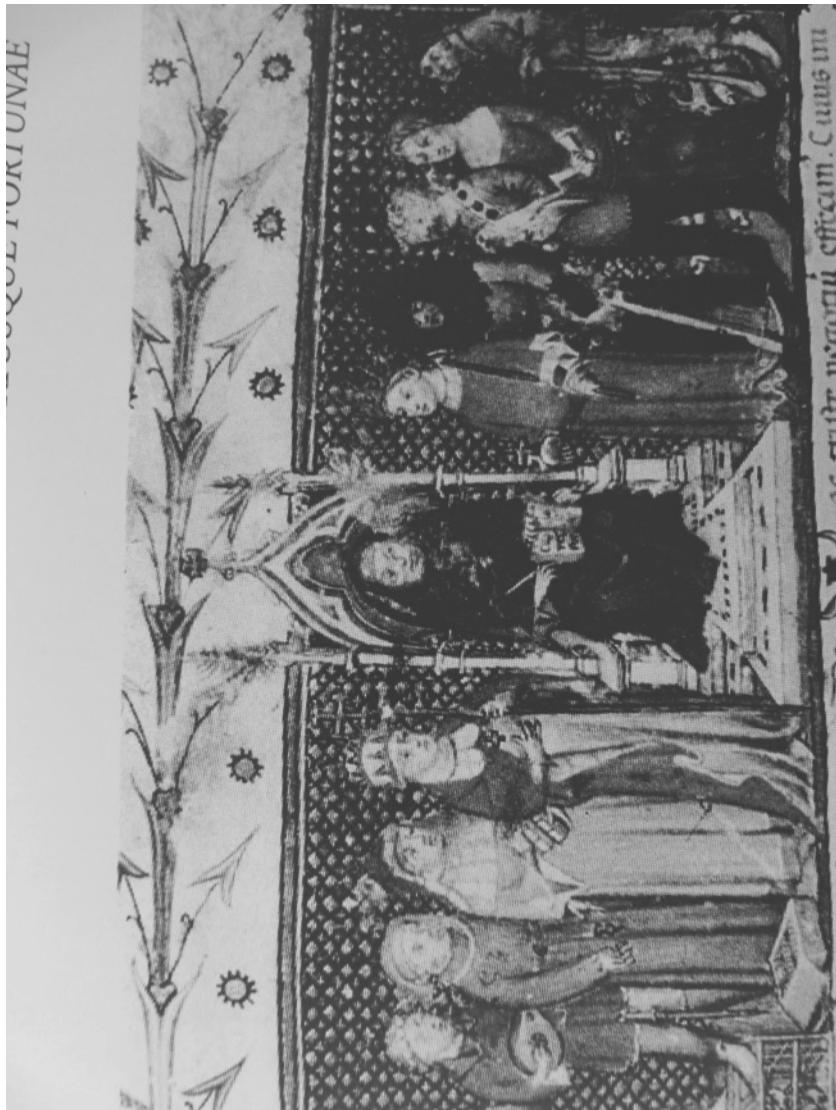


Fig. 7. Author's portrait of Petrarch (ca. 1400). Illumination. Manuscript Milan, Biblioteca Nazionale
Braidense, MS AD XIII 30, fol. 1r.

philosophy, especially Seneca the Younger. Time and again, they take on a radical harshness that is somewhat removed from mainstream Christian thinking, which would not argue for the total extermination of the emotions. The fact that the reader is guided to accept, as a pupil, Ratio's words as authoritative, is reinforced by an image in the initial of the first dialogue [Fig. 8]. The personification of Ratio is depicted as a queen or empress sitting on a cathedra. Her authority is emphasised by the crown, sceptre and a kind of 'Reichsapfel'. In front of her stands a very young nobleman, the personification of the emotions 'Hope and Joy' ('Spes et Gaudium'). He takes the part of the pupil, Ratio the part of the teacher. As in the author's portrait, the reader is invited to identify with the audience, viz. the pupils who surround the author's cathedra. Thus, in the first dialogue the reader is supposed to learn from Ratio that it is wrong merely to enjoy young age. The dedicatee, Azo da Correggio, bodies forth further guidance: in the initial he is shown sitting in front of the authoritative teacher Petrarch, who is dressed in a clerical robe and explains to him (with book open on his knees) the content of *De remediis*.



Fig. 8. Ratio and Gaudium/Spes. Petrarch, *De remediis utriusque fortune*, Manuscript Milan, Biblioteca Nazionale Braidense MS AD XIII 30, fol. 3r.

There exists a variety of authors' portraits that guide the audience to receive *De remediis* as a didactic dialogue between a teacher and his pupils. In a manuscript of 1388, written and illuminated in Milan and now preserved in St. Petersburg, an author's portrait painted above the first initial represents Petrarch sitting at a lectionary.³³ His robe characterises him as a university teacher and a cleric. His work lies open on the lectionary, and he handles it with his left hand. He raises his right hand and index finger, making a demonstrative gesture that signifies teaching. Here again, the author Petrarch acts the part of a university lecturer, on the model of Thomas Aquinas, reading and explaining his work to his pupils [cf. Thomas, Luna, in Fig. 6]. This time the pupils are not depicted, although the bench to the right would leave room for a student. It could very well be that the reader is supposed to take this place in his imagination and let himself be taught by the '*magister*'. In a manuscript of 1432, preserved in de Bibliothèque Nationale, we again encounter the master in a clerical robe, making the well known teaching gesture [Fig. 9]. With his left hand, he holds up the work he is about to explain to his pupils. They are not depicted, but the reader is invited to substitute for the academic audience.

In another beautiful author's portrait of *De remediis*, made in France ca. 1400, now preserved in Cambrai, Petrarch again appears as a teacher, wearing the robe of a university professor, sitting on a cathedra and gesturing instructively [Fig. 10].³⁴ He is explaining his work to four pupils grouped in front of him. This miniature clearly encourages the reader to identify the author Petrarch with Ratio: the author's pupils are the emotions (Spes, Gaudium, Metus, and Dolor), who depend on Fortune, hanging on her wheel. An interesting detail forms the pinnacle of the *cathedra*. Petrarch had of course never been a university professor, although he received and declined the offer of a professorship from the city of Florence in 1351. On the other hand, he was crowned poet laureate in Rome in 1341.³⁵ The detail on top of the cathedra is the laurel crown. What have the laurels of the poet to do with a university chair? They symbolically represent the authority

³³ St. Petersburg, Saltykov-Scedrin Public Library, MS. Lat. Fv. XV., no. 1, fol. 72r.

³⁴ Cambrai, Bibliothèque municipale, MS. B+239 (229), fol. 1r.

³⁵ Wilkins E.H., "The Coronation of Petrarch", *Speculum* 18 (1943) 155–197 (more recently in German, "Die Krönung Petrarcas", in Buck A. (ed.), *Petrarca* (Darmstadt: 1976) 100–167); Flood J.L., *Poets Laureate in the Holy Roman Empire* (Berlin – New York: 2006) lxiv–lxxi; Petrarch's coronation speech was edited by Godi C., "La Colatio laureationis del Petrarca", *Italia medioevale ed umanistica* 13 (1970) 13–27.



Fig. 9. Author's portrait of Petrarch (ca. 1432). Manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, cod. Lat. 10209 (containing the treatise *De remediis*), fol. 5r.



Fig. 10 Author's portrait of Petrarch (ca. 1490). Cambrai, Bibliothèque municipale, MS. B+239 (229) (containing the treatise *De remediis*), fol. 1r.

of teaching. The ceremony performed by Orso, Count of Anguillaria and the knight Giordano de' Orsini in the name of the senate of Rome and Robert d'Anjou, King of Naples, was modelled on medieval university graduation ceremonies with an *examen privatum* and *examen publicum*, the *magister* title and a diploma.³⁶ Petrarch's diploma of coronation is preserved:³⁷ it gave the poet, amongst others, the title of "magister" and a *venia docendi ubique*.³⁸ Thus, in the Cambrai portrait, the laurel crown authorizes the poet Petrarch as a university teacher, as much as does the other symbol of honour, the *cathedra*.

Let us now return to the author's portrait on the first page of the Florentine manuscript of the *Canzoniere* [Fig. 3]. It has now become plausible to identify the people to the right as the readers, viz. pupils, who are being taught by the author. Laura, who leads them, fulfils a triple function: she embodies the work's main topic, authorizes Petrarch (as a teacher of wisdom) and operates as the work's first reader. The laurels she holds in her right hand are not only meant to help the viewer ascertain her name. Laura is about to offer them to Petrarch, and thereby to license him as a teacher. The whole scene is meant to impel the reader to the *Canzoniere* as didactic literature. The cat in combination with the didactic *cathedra* now fulfills the function of a symbolic attribute of a wise man or saint. This may or may not be connected with the Arquà cult of Petrarch.³⁹ One may compare the cat with the iconography of S. Jerome who is depicted regularly with the lion at his feet.⁴⁰ In medieval literature, moreover, Solomon

³⁶ Sottilli A., "Petrarcas Dichterkrönung als artistische Doktorpromotion", in Von Martels Z. – Steenbakkers P. – Vanderjagt A. (eds.), *Limae labor et mora. Opstellen voor Fokke Akkerman ter gelegenheid van zijn zeventigste verjaardag* (Leende: 2000) 20–31; Flood, *Poets Laureate* lxv.

³⁷ Mertens D., "Petrarcas 'Privilegium laureationis'", Borgolte M. – Spilling H. (eds.), *Litterae Medii Aevi. Festschrift für Johannes Autenrieth* (Sigmaringen: 1988) 225–247; Flood, *Poets Laureate* lxvii–lx; Franciscus Petrarcha, *Opera quae extant omnia* [...] (Basel, Henricus Petri: 1554) 1254–1256.

³⁸ Flood, *Poets Laureate* lxi: 'prefatum Franciscum hodierno videlicet paschalis solemnitatis die in Capitolio Romano [...] tam dicti regis quam nostro et populi Romani nomine *magistrum*, poetam et historicum *declarantes praeclaro magisterii nomine insignivimus* [...] nos, Ursus comes et senator prefatus [...] dantes eidem tam in dicta arte poetica atque in historia quam in omnibus spectantibus ad easdem [...] tam in hac sacratissima urbe [...] quam alibi ubicunque locorum *legendi, disputandi, interpretandi* [...] liberam tenore presentium potestatem [...]' (Italics mine).

³⁹ Cf. above.

⁴⁰ Riderbos B., *Saint and Symbol. Images of Saint Jerome in Early Italian Art* (Groningen: 1984); Russo D., *Saint Jérôme en Italie. Étude d'iconographie et de spiritualité* [...] (Paris – Rome: 1988).

is known as the keeper of a cat. It may not be farfetched to suggest that Petrarch is here being associated with the medieval wise man *par excellence*. One may now ask how it might make sense to understand the *Canzoniere* as didactic literature. Canzone 1, accompanied by the author's portrait, in fact provides an answer. Petrarch speaks directly to his readers: having finally come to the realization that his love was mere idleness, he avows both regret and shame and endorses *contemptus mundi* as the only right response.

Ma ben veggio or si come al popol tutto
 Favola fui gran tempo, onde sovente
 Di me medesmo meco mi vergogno;

Et del mio vaneggiar vergogne è 'l frutto,
 E 'l pentersi, e 'l conoscer chiaramente
 Che quanto piace al mondo è breve sogno.

But now I see well how for a long time I was the talk of the crowd
 For which often I am ashamed of myself within;

And of my raving, shame is the fruit and repentance, and the clear
 knowledge
 That whatever pleases the world is a brief dream.⁴¹

By this, he invites the reader to understand the *Canzoniere* in an auto-biographical and teleological way. The poem demonstrates the poet's process of learning and inner development. Petrarch, in a sense, presents himself as an example of how to deal with earthly love. One must resist fleshly lust, refusing to surrender to its charms, striving instead to sublimate it into spiritual love. The solemn handing over of the laurels enacts the result of this process. The author's portrait guides the reader to an understanding of Petrarch as the master of spiritual love.

The location of the didactic cathedra in the natural landscape likewise helps to guide the reader. The landscape is constituted as a *locus amoenus*, which functions as the ideal place of poetic inspiration. At the same time, the *locus amoenus* is the ideal place of love. Love may be taught 'en plein air'. An interesting parallel is provided by manuscripts of Ovid, who was considered the Master of Love. A Flemish manuscript of ca. 1497, including the *Ars amatoria*, the *Art of Love*,

⁴¹ For the text and translation see Petrarch's *Lyric Poems. The Rime sparse and Other Lyrics*, transl. and ed. by R.M. Durling (Cambridge, Mass. – London, England: 1976) 36–37.

now preserved in Holkham Hall, starts with an author's portrait of Ovid:⁴² he is depicted as a university professor teaching from a *cathedra*. With his right hand he makes a teaching gesture, explaining his work to his readership of pupils, represented by four couples of different age, who sit upon the grass and indulge in physical contact. Whereas Ovid's *Art of Love* was considered a manual of earthly love, Petrarch's *Canzoniere* was thought to teach how earthly love could be sublimated into the spiritual.

We have numerous examples of Petrarch's author's portrait being used as a reader's guide to moral interpretation of the *Canzoniere*. For instance, in the intriguing introductory miniature of a codex painted by Francesco del Chierico in 1476,⁴³ once owned by Lorenzo il Magnifico, now preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, we find a double author's portrait that demonstrates the moral development the poet has undergone, and is also intended to serve as a moral example for the reader [Fig. 11]. In the tondo in the lower part of the page, one observes the love-sick poet sitting under a laurel tree. Both the laurel tree and the poet reappear in the large miniature in the middle of the page: here we see Petrarch as a shipwrecked lover saving his life by clutching the laurel tree. The natural landscape, the ideal setting of love, has been flooded by the dangerous tide of emotion. The laurel tree alone has the power to save, since it represents the sublimation of the emotions and opposes *ascesis* to fleshly lust.

The didactic understanding of love comes surprisingly close to the mortification of the emotions in *De remediis utriusque fortune*.⁴⁴ For example, in Book I, chapter 69, "Love Affairs", Ratio or the *doctor egregius* Petrarch endeavours strongly to dissuade from engaging in such affairs. Love is described as a sweet poison, a pleasant illness that will ultimately cause death, by which spiritual death is meant. Ratio underlines the argument that Love leads to death, by invoking the mythological examples of Leander, Biblis, Procris, and Pyramus.

⁴² Holkham Hall, MS. 324, fol. 159v. Cf. Trapp, "Portraits of Ovid in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance", in idem, *Studies of Petrarch and his Influence* (341–383) 374 [Fig. 4].

⁴³ MS. Ital. 548, fol. 1v.

⁴⁴ There is no modern critical edition of *De remediis*. The best text is probably the one offered by Jean le Preux: Francisci Petrarchae *De remediis utriusque fortunae libri duo* (ed. 2a; Bern: 1600). For an English translation with annotations see C.H. Rawski's *Petrarch's Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul* (Bloomington – Indianapolis: 1991) 5 vols.

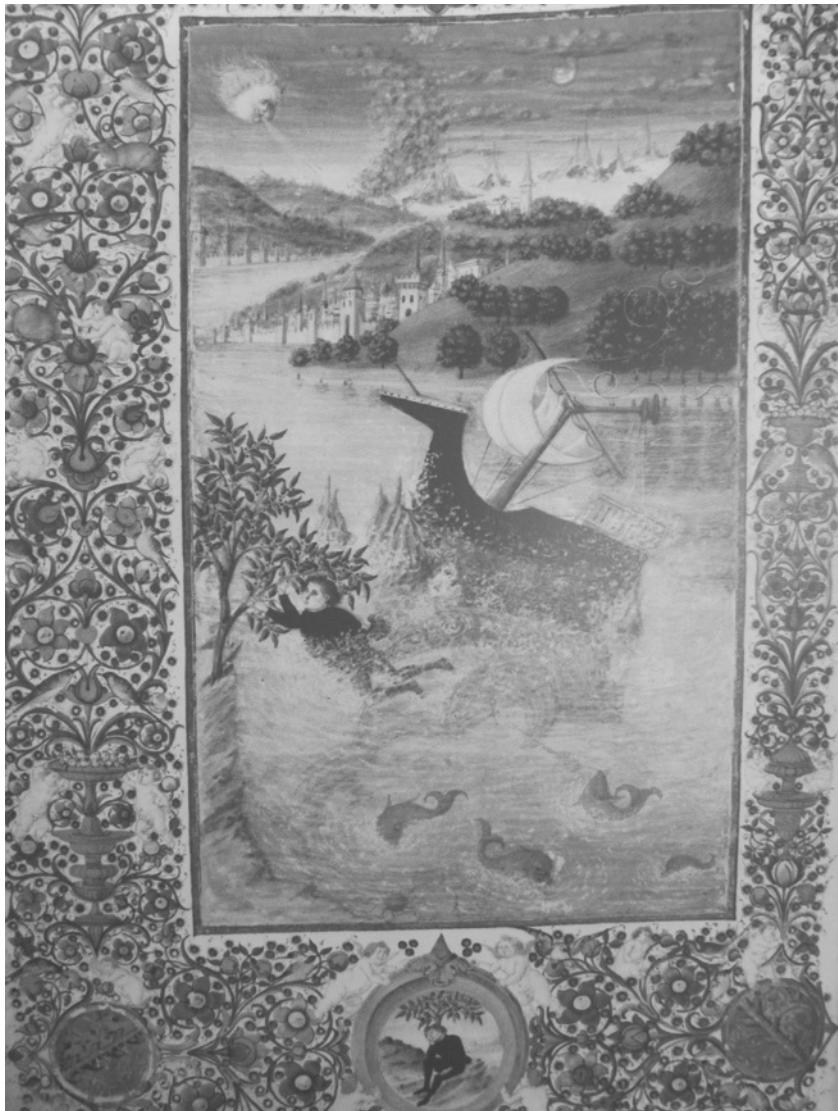


Fig. 11. Petrarch as shipwrecked Lover (1476). Manuscript Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. Ital. 548 (containing the *Canzoniere*), fol. 1r.

JOY: I enjoy pleasant love.

REASON: You are entangled in pleasant snares.

JOY: I am aflame with pleasant love.

REASON: You say correctly "aflame", because love is an invisible fire, a welcome wound, a savoury poison, sweet bitterness, delectable affliction, delightful torment, *alluring death*.

[...]

REASON: You think you will hear from me what the *Master of Love* has said – that you should rejoice in blissful ardour and sail before the wind of your desire. But this is not my counsel.

I advise that the more sweetly you burn, the more carefully you should shun the flames of passion. The most dangerous evils are those that delight; and often such sweetness ends in utter despair.

JUY: I love and I am loved.

REASON: If this is so, what is it but a double knot, a tighter bond, a grave peril? [...]⁴⁵

The Master of Love Ratio mentions is Ovid,⁴⁶ the same teacher of love who was depicted in the author's portrait of the *Ars amatoria* manuscript at Holkham Hall. Petrarch or his Ratio, however, is a master of a totally different kind. He is closer to the ancient Stoic philosopher Seneca, who is quoted time and again in *De remediis* and is seen to partake of the common Christian philosophy of the *contemptus mundi*.

Let us return now to Altichiero's famous portrait in the Paris manuscript [Fig. 1]. In what way does it function as a guide to the reader? The portrait, to be sure, was not taken from life. It is a *post mortem* construction. It is regrettable that this portrait is always taken out of its codicological context. It is located on the first page of Petrarch's treatise *De viris illustribus*, *On Famous Men*, which commemorates the important and predominantly Roman men of Antiquity. I think that the author's portrait functioned firstly as an intermediary between the reader and the content of the work and secondly as an instrument authorizing the writer with respect to his text's content. The author's portrait is placed directly above the table of contents, the *rubricae*, which is a list of famous men from the past. The author is, I believe, depicted as one of them, as a *vir illustris*. This also implies that the portrait does simply not represent a living person. The artist has stripped away all details that would point to life lived in the present. There is

⁴⁵ Petrarch's *Remedies for Fortune* transl. Rawski vol. I 197–198.

⁴⁶ Petrarch alludes to Ovid, *Remedia amoris* 13–14: 'Siquis amat quod amare iuvat, feliciter ardet:/ Gaudeat et vento naviget ille suo'.

no background, no construction of space, no narrative, and no rendering of any bodily activity, such as writing, teaching or reading. It would seem that this was a choice consciously made by the artist or the man who ordered the image, Petrarch's admirer and friend Lombardo della Seta. The depiction *en profil* also contributes to the solemn effect of this author's portrait. A portrait of this kind tells the reader that the person depicted must be a famous, important man. Since the portrait renders Petrarch as a *vir illustris*, it authorises him as a person competent to transmit and administer the lives of the *viri illustres* from Antiquity. A man like the portrayed is able to make contact with the dead, the *mortui*, to talk to them and to bring them back to life. This concept of Petrarch as a transmitter of Antiquity, who engages in conversation with the men of the past, is always present in his writings – the *Familiar Letters*, the *Letters of Old Age*, *De vita solitaria* etc. It is also worth recalling that Lombardo della Seta, the man who ordered the manuscript and the portrait, was familiar with this concept. In a short dialogic treatise describing his manner of life, written in imitation of Petrarch's *De vita solitaria*, he is asked by a puzzled visitor, 'With whom do you talk? What is your company?'. Lombardo's lapidary answer is 'the dead' ('mortui').⁴⁷ In this respect, Lombardo della Seta was an extremely good pupil of Petrarch. In the preface added to the *De viris illustribus* manuscript, which follows directly after the portrait, he underlines this function of speaking with the dead: the author Petrarch, a man of godly spirit blessed with eternal glory, has succeeded in assembling all famous men, whatever their place of origin, within this single book, as if into a hall of fame: 'in uno volumine tamquam in clarissimo domicilio'.⁴⁸ Petrarch is described as the owner of this 'domicilium', whom the famous men have honoured by accepting his invitation. In his house, Petrarch asks them one by one to have a conversation with him. The list of names, written directly under

⁴⁷ Cf. Enenkel K.A.E., "Lucilius redivivus. Zur Seneca-Rezeption des Frühhumanismus: Lombardo della Setas Briefdialog 'De dispositione vite sue'", in: Leonardi C. (Hrsg.), *Gli umanesimi medievali. Atti del II Congresso dell' Internationales Mittelalteinerkomitee*, Firenze, Certosa del Galluzzo (Tavarnuzze – Impruneta – Florence: 1998) 111–120.

⁴⁸ Fol. 2v.; Petrarca, *De viris illustribus*, ed. G. Martellotti (Florence: 1964) xxv: 'Franciscum Petracam [sic] cuius ingenii divinitatem animadvertisimus [...] viros omnes prestantissimos, quos illustres appellat, diversis librorum monumentis quasi quibusdam regionibus dissipatos in uno volumine tanquam in clarissimo domicilio collocare molientem et nunc hos evocantem nunc illos [...].'

Petrarch's portrait, is conceived, so to say, as a list of spiritual guests. The owner of the manuscript was the Lord of Padua, Francesco da Carrara. It was the dedication copy Lombardo gave to him. Francesco da Carrara was so impressed by this concept of *De viris illustribus*, that he ordered a large hall in his palace, the Sala dei Giganti, to be painted as a hall of fame, with the heroes of Antiquity. In the middle he had painted an author's portrait of Petrarch, acknowledging him as the host who had invited these famous men into his 'domicilium' [Fig. 12].⁴⁹ Thus, the Paris portrait of Petrarch provides very strong guidance to the reader, compelling him to meditate on the relationship between virtue and eternal fame, antiquity and fame, history and fame, and literature and history.

⁴⁹ On the images in the Sala die Giganti cf. Mommsen Th.E. Jr., "Petrarch and the Decoration of the Sala virorum illustrum in Padua", *Art Bulletin* 34 (1952) 96–116; repr. in idem, *Medieval and Renaissance Studies* (2nd ed. Ithaca, N.Y.: 1966) 130–174.



Fig. 12. Portrait of Petrarch, Padua, Sala dei Giganti.

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SOLOMON WRITING AND RESTING: TRADITION, WORDS AND IMAGES IN THE 1548 DUTCH “LOUVAIN BIBLE”*

Wim François

On 9 May 1546, the authorities of the Low Countries took a new step in their Bible politics. Fifty or so Dutch and French editions of the Bible were placed on the Index by the Louvain theologians. It is clear, however, that the imperial authorities and the Louvain Theological Faculty did not only want to forbid the ‘unreliable’ Bible translations in a negative way. Immediately after the publication of the Index, they entered into an agreement with the Louvain printer, Bartholomeus van Grave (or Gravius), with the intention of publishing new, authorized Catholic Bible translations, in both Dutch and French. More than ever, there was a demand for a translation of the Vulgate, which a few months earlier the Council of Trent had promulgated as the authentic Bible text of the Church. In addition, the version in question was to be stripped of all marginal notes. In 1548 the Dutch Louvain Bible was published by Van Grave. After giving some basic information about the Louvain Bible and the Vorsterman Bible, which the former was to replace, I will discuss the Louvain view on Scripture, tradition and vernacular Bible reading, that provides the foundation for the Louvain Bible-project. In the second part of my essay, I intend to shed light on the illustration program of the Bible in question and to consider how this program fits in with the Bible’s general conception. Moving from textual translation to visualization, I will consider in detail the picture representing *Solomon Writing and Resting*, before drawing some general conclusions about the relationship between text, paratext and images in such an official vernacular Bible edition.

The Louvain Bible: Scripture, Tradition and Vernacular Bible-reading

The translation the Louvain Bible offered was made by Nicolaus van Winghe (ca. 1495–1552), an Augustinian canon regular from the

* I wish to thank Ms. Jennifer Besselsen-Dunachie for her invaluable assistance in translating this text.

congregation of Windesheim, belonging to the monastery of Sint-Maartensdal in Louvain [Fig. 1].¹ The congregation was an exponent of the late development of the *Devotio Moderna* and had always cherished a biblical spirituality. This had been shaped through, amongst other things, the research undertaken for a purified Vulgate text,² although Van Winghe was himself influenced by humanism and had developed a preference for the original Greek text.³ The canons of Windesheim had particularly distinguished themselves through their openness for Bible reading in the vernacular, and their *librarius* Johan Schutken (†1423) had already, around 1400, translated the Epistle and the Gospel readings (and probably the entire New Testament), in addition to the Psalms into the vernacular for the *laici spirituales*.⁴ Nicolaus van Winghe in this way followed in the footsteps of his illustrious confrère when he, a century and a half later it is true, but with the same spirituality as foundation and with the blessing of the Louvain theologians,

¹ Regarding the Dutch Louvain Bible, see especially Pacificus [= Van Hereweghen], “De Leuvense bijbelvertaler Nicolaus van Winghe. Zijn leven en zijn werk”, *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 23 (1949) 5–38, 150–167, 268–314, and 357–395. A number of other interesting publications have subsequently been devoted to the Louvain Bible: Buyten L. van, “Het kontrakt van Bartholomeus Gravius, Anthonis-Maria Bergaigne en Jan Waan voor het drukken van de ‘Leuvense Bijbels’ (1547)”, *Mededelingen van de Geschied- en Oudheidkundige Kring voor Leuven en omgeving* 5 (1965) 83–95; Bruin C.C. de, *De Statenbijbel en zijn voorgangers. Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen vanaf de Reformatie tot 1637*, rev. F.G.M. Broeyer (Haarlem – Brussels: 1993) 141–147; Gilmont J.-F., “La concurrence entre deux Bibles flamandes”, in idem, *Le livre et ses secrets* (Geneva – Louvain-la-Neuve: 2003) 151–162, esp. 152–155. For the Bible edition itself: *Den gheheelen Bybel [...] met grooter naersticheyt ende arbeyt nu corts in duytsche van nyews overhestelt wt den Latijnschen ouden text*, trans. Nicolaus van Winghe (Louvain, Bartholomeus van Grave: 1548).

² Lourdaux W., “Het boekenbezit en het boekengebruik bij de Moderne Devoten”, in *Studies over het boekenbezit en boekengebruik in de Nederlanden voor 1600* (Brussels: 1974) 247–325, esp. 285–291; Post R.R., *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought* 3] (Leiden – Boston: 1968) 306–307; also Greiteman N., *De Windesheimsche Vulgaatervisie in de vijftiende eeuw* (Hilversum: 1937).

³ See in this regard: G. Morinck to N. van Winghe, 9 April 1545, in Vocht H. de, *Monumenta Humanistica Lovaniensia. Texts and Studies about Louvain Humanists in the First Half of the XVIth Century. Erasmus – Vives – Dorpius – Clenardus – Goes – Moringus*, *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 4 (Louvain: 1934) 562.

⁴ Deschamps J., “De verspreiding van Johan Scutkens vertaling van het Nieuwe Testament en de oudtestamentische perikopen”, *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis/ Dutch Review of Church History* 56 (1975–76) 159–179; Corbellini S., “De Noordnederlandse vertaling van het Nieuwe Testament. Het paradijs in een kloostertcel”, in Hollander A. den – Kwakkel E. – Scheepsma W. (eds.), *Middelnederlandse bijbelvertalingen*, *Middeleeuwse Studies en Bronnen* 102 (Hilversum: 2007) 131–145.



Fig. 1. Title-page to *Den gheheelen Bybel* [...] (Louvain, Bartholomeus van Grave: 1548). K.U. Leuven, Maurits Sabbe Library, P. 22.055.1/F°/Bijb 1548, fol. # 1r.

took it upon himself to translate the Scriptures into the vernacular. It may be noted here for the sake of completeness that two years after Bartholomeus van Grave's publication of the Dutch Louvain Bible, in 1550, the French Louvain Bible, edited by Nicolas de Leuze, master of theology and his assistant François de Larben, was published.⁵

In a way, both editions, as official Catholic Bible translations for the Low Countries, replaced Willem Vorsterman's Dutch Bible of 1528 and the French version of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples – Martin Lempereur (Merten de Keyser) of 1530, respectively. The text of Vorsterman's 1528 Bible (in addition to its prologue) offers proof of the outspoken eclectic character of this publication.⁶ Its Old Testament text relied upon a late medieval Psalm version issued from the milieus of Christian humanists – who, in their turn, were rooted in the *Devotio Moderna* – as well as texts borrowed from the 1527 German Prophets' Bible translated by the spiritualizing Anabaptists Hans Denck and Ludwig Hätzer, and materials taken from Jacob van Liesvelt's 1526 Dutch Bible, which in its turn relied either on the Luther Bible or on the Vulgate. The texts with a Protestant origin had been corrected on the basis of the Vulgate. The deuterocanonical (c.q. apocryphal) books of the Old Testament were to be found in Vorsterman's Bible in the same place as in the Vulgate. The text of the New Testament had been borrowed from Christoffel van Ruremund's moderate Luther-translation of 1526. The phenomenon described here, which has been identified in publications all over Europe, has been rightly

⁵ On the French Louvain Bible see, amongst others, Bogaert P.-M. – Gilmont J.-F., “La première Bible française de Louvain (1550)”, *Revue Théologique de Louvain* 11 (1980) 275–309; idem, “De Lefèvre d'Étaples à la fin du XVI^e siècle”, in Bogaert P.-M. (ed.), *Les Bibles en français: Histoire illustrée du Moyen Âge à nos jours* (Turnhout: 1991) 47–106, esp. 89–91.

⁶ On the Vorsterman Bible, see amongst others: Augustijn C., “De Vorstermanbijbel van 1528”, *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis/ Dutch Review of Church History* 56 (1975–76) 78–94; De Bruin, *De Statenbijbel en zijn voorgangers*, rev. Broecker 111–118; Hollander A. den, *De Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen. Dutch Translations of the Bible 1522–1545*, *Bibliotheca Bibliographica Neerlandica* 33 (Nieuwkoop: 1997) 90–92, 189–193, 226, 350–357; Arblaster P., “‘Totius Mundi Emporium’: Antwerp as a Centre for Vernacular Bible Translations 1523–1545”, in Gelderblom A.-J. – Jong J.L. den – Vaeck M. van (eds.), *The Low Countries as a Crossroads of Religious Beliefs*, *Intersections* 3 (Leiden – Boston: 2004) 9–31, esp. 22–25. The information given in these publications should be combined with research conducted at *Ghent University* by Desplenter Y., “Vroegmoderne Nederlandse bijbelvertalingen middeleeuwser dan vermoed. Vondst van een vijftiende-eeuwse getuige van het Vorsterman-psalter (1528)”, *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 123 (2007) 185–207.

characterized by F.M. Higman as 'emprunts trans-confessionels', borrowings from biblical material originating from diverse confessional currents,⁷ if we are allowed to use that expression here, for the phenomenon is characteristic of the time before confessional borders had been firmly established. It must be emphasized, however, that Vorsterman's subsequent Bible editions, from as early as 1529 but particularly from 1530 onward, conformed even more to the Vulgate text (and removed outspoken Protestant statements from the prologues). This was in particular the case with the New Testament, for which Vorsterman adopted Michiel Hillen van Hoochstraten's version. Hillen van Hoochstraten had, in 1527, extensively adapted the New Testament text of Cornelis Hendricsz Lettersnijders' Erasmus translation (1524), to the Vulgate. References to the original Hebrew and Greek text of the New Testament were however maintained in the marginal glosses. Vorsterman's (semi-)official Catholic edition, approved in the name of the Louvain theologians by the University's vice-chancellor and book censor, Nicolas Coppin (†1535), went through several reprints in the thirties and forties of the sixteenth century. These reprints were not only produced by Hillen van Hoochstraten and Vorsterman, but also by Henrick Peetersen van Middelburch.⁸

By way of comparison, I should note that Lempereur's French editions made the inverse movement. For his 1530 edition he took as a basis the translation of Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (New Testament 1523, books of the Old Testament 1528 ff.), which largely relied upon the Vulgate, but he had adjusted several passages with the help of both Erasmus' *Novum Testamentum*, and the Latin translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, edited in the years 1527–1528 by the Dominican and Hebrew scholar Santes Pagninus. One has to be aware of the irony of this situation. The Parisian theologians, being radical opponents to Bible reading in the vernacular, had forbidden Lefèvre's translations of

⁷ Higman F.M., *Bibliographie matérielle et histoire intellectuelle: Les débuts de la Réforme française* [The Cassal Bequest Lecture, University of London, 29 April 1986] (London: 1986) 7–10.

⁸ The fact that the Vorsterman Bible of 1528 was still indebted to the Luther Bible, both in its prologues and in the text itself, has received much attention from the Northern Netherlands' Protestant Church historians. The numerous subsequent editions of the Vorsterman Bible, which offer a text more adapted to the Vulgate, are however much more representative of the Bible production of the Antwerp printer than his Bible of 1528, which was a 'first attempt'. On the later editions of the Vorsterman Bible, see the relevant passages in the works cited above.

the New Testament, in spite of the fact that they relied upon the Vulgate. The Louvain masters for their part explicitly approved the 1530 Bible of Lefèvre – Lempereur, even though its text was distanced from the Vulgate! The subsequent editions of the French Bible (1534ff.) aligned themselves even more with the Greek and Hebrew text, albeit in a roundabout way, through their use of the Latin version edited by Robert Estienne in 1532.⁹

After the Council of Trent had promulgated the Vulgate as the authentic text of the Catholic Church in 1546, however, vernacular versions had to offer an uncompromising translation of the Vulgate, and abandon marginal glosses. As regards the Dutch Louvain Bible, in his translation of the Old Testament, Nicolaus van Winghe took as his basis the Delft Bible of 1477, which he emended with the help of the Latin Vulgate revision that had been produced by the Louvain theologian Jean Henten eleven months earlier in 1547, and he also adapted the language to the common speech of sixteenth-century Brabant. Additionally, with his New Testament, Van Winghe scrupulously followed Henten's Vulgate revision, but in his Brabantine Dutch translation, he was definitely indebted to the 'Bible language' to be found in editions of the Epistles and the Gospels published since 1477, particularly in Holland and Utrecht. In order to find a solution for individual translation problems, Van Winghe also sought inspiration from the bibles of the Dominicans Johann Dietenberger (1534) and Johann Eck (1537), who had produced German 'vulgatized' versions of the Luther Bible. In this way, Van Winghe completely ignored all other reform-minded Dutch translations that had come into circulation since 1522. During his translation work Nicholas van Winghe had, according to his own record, also received support and coaching from two theologians: Pieter de Corte (†1567), the pastor of the St. Peter's church in Louvain (and the rector of the University), and Godevaert Strijrode

⁹ On the editions of Lefèvre – Lempereur in Antwerp see, amongst others, Bedouelle G., *Lefèvre d'Étaples et l'Intelligence des Écritures*, *Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance* 152 (Geneva: 1976) 112–117; Bogaert – Gilmont, "De Lefèvre d'Étaples à la fin du XVI^e siècle" 56–65; François W., "The Condemnation of Vernacular Bible Reading by the Parisian theologians (1523–31)", in François W. – Hollander A. de (eds.), *Infant Milk or Hardy Nourishment? The Bible for Lay People and Theologians in the Early Modern Period*, *Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium* 221 (Louvain: 2009) 111–139; esp. 112–118, 125–130. On the editions as such, see Chambers B.T., *Bibliography of French Bibles, vol. I. Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century French-Language Editions of the Scriptures*, *Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance* 192 (Geneva: 1983) *passim*.

(†1549), regent of the Dominican study house in Louvain. Both had long been involved in preaching and explaining the Word of God and the Scriptures in the vernacular to common folk

In a prologue to 'his' Dutch Louvain Bible, Nicolaus van Winghe discusses extensively the legitimacy of reading the Scriptures in the vernacular.¹⁰ His views were formed within the local context of thinking about the relationship between Scripture and tradition(s). It is possible that Van Winghe found inspiration in the work of the Louvain theologian Johannes Driedo (†1535), entitled *De ecclesiasticis scripturis et dogmatibus* (1533); this book likely played a major role in elucidating theologically the relation between Scripture and tradition, that would eventually be ratified at the Council of Trent (1546). Making use of the metaphor of the light and the lamp, Van Winghe suggests in the first part of his prologue¹¹ that the light of God's Word reaches people through the lamp that is Scripture. Prior to the writing of the Scriptures, God had already given the true light and true Word to the patriarchs, prophets and apostles through the inner working of the Spirit. They for their part handed down this true light and true Word to the following generations. And God continued to inspire popes, bishops, pastors and teachers of the Church to teach many salutary things that were not explicitly expressed in the Scriptures. In complete accordance with the general view taken in Louvain, Van Winghe suggested that it was only through this Church tradition that it had become clear which Bible books should be considered holy and canonical. In addition to this, practices and teachings not explicitly found in the Scriptures continued to be handed down through Church. Moreover, tradition provided the necessary clarification of obscure and contradictory scriptural passages. In order to understand the Scriptures, especially in its obscure passages, a keen intellect, acquired knowledge, and God's grace were indispensable. Whoever did not satisfy these conditions was better off reading the scriptural commentaries of the holy doctors of the Church or listening to the sermons of preachers in church. These authorities would better be able to elucidate the Scriptures in a manner consistent with the traditional

¹⁰ François W., "Het voorwoord bij de 'Leuvense bijbel' van Nicholaus van Winghe (1548). Over Schrift, Traditie en volkstalige Bijbellezing", *Ons Geestelijk Erf* 79 (2005–2008) 7–50.

¹¹ Van Winghe, *Onderwijs van der Heylegher Scriptueren*, fols. A1v–B5v. Cf. François, "Het voorwoord bij de 'Leuvense bijbel'" 17–38.

teaching of the Church. Despite the fact that he had himself composed a translation of the Bible, Van Winghe set about his task with great reticence, insisting that reading of the Bible be couple with the orthodox explanation of Scripture licensed by the Church. Lay people who read the Bible on their own, risked interpreting it according to their own idiosyncratic opinions and would eventually lapse into erroneous teachings and heresies.

Van Winghe expresses similar ideas in the second part of his prologue,¹² in which he compares the Bible to a garden full of (spiritual) food and vital herbs. The Louvain Bible translator displayed great caution, however, and emphasized that this ‘biblical nourishment’ required to be prepared correctly before being consumed. The metaphors of light and food, and the summing-up of the conditions under which the believer should read the Scriptures are possibly a further development of ideas that Van Winghe came across in Thomas a Kempis’ *Imitatio Christi* (1441). Thomas a Kempis had been a confrère in the congregation of Windesheim, and Van Winghe published a translation of his *Imitatio Christi* in 1548, the same year in which the Dutch Louvain Bible was issued.

In the last part of his prologue,¹³ Van Winghe legitimates his translation as an alternative to the many ‘falsified’ bibles that were in circulation at the time. In his opinion, such forgeries have arisen mainly because the text of the Latin Vulgate has been insufficiently or inaccurately rendered and false teachings inserted into the translations. Erroneous doctrines have also been included, argues Van Winghe, in the annotations and the summaries given before the chapters. Here too, Van Winghe emphasizes that a new ‘orthodox’ Bible translation should function within an orthodox context: through personal reading of the Bible, people could prepare themselves to hear sermons in church and thus become better able to understand the Scriptures, both read and heard.

In conclusion, with regard to vernacular Bible reading, Van Winghe acts as a spokesman for the particular point of view associated with Louvain. The *magistri Lovanienses* certainly took a cautious position in the theological debate, and it was in no way their intention to

¹² Van Winghe, *Onderwijs van der Heylegher Scriptueren*, fols. B5v–C2r. Cf. François, “Het voorwoord bij de ‘Leuvense bijbel’” 38–44.

¹³ Van Winghe, *Onderwijs van der Heylegher Scriptueren*, fol. C2r–C2v. Cf. François, “Het voorwoord bij de ‘Leuvense bijbel’” 44–48.

encourage vernacular Bible reading (as the Protestant reformers were wont to do), although they did tolerate the lay reading of the Bible in the vernacular.

The Illustrations in the Louvain Bible

Bart Rosier has counted 119 illustrations in the 1548 Louvain Bible, 111 in the Old Testament and only 8 in the New Testament. These illustrations have, as was common practice, an extensive 'pedigree'. Gravius printed the illustrations to the Old Testament from the blocks Martin Lempereur had originally used for his French Bible of 1530, the same woodcuts Willem Vorsterman had used for his bibles from 1532 onward.¹⁴ These woodcuts are in part faithful copies, in part free-style imitations of the pictures that had been included, from 1512 onward, in the *Biblia cum concordantiis veteris et novi testamenti*, a Vulgate edition printed and published by Jacob Sacon in Lyons (though financed by Anton Koberger of Nuremberg).¹⁵ Many of these illustrations were in turn copied in a more or less free style after the woodcuts in the 1511 Vulgate edition of the Venetian printer-editor LucAntonio di Giunta.¹⁶ Giunta had commissioned them to be made previously for his Italian Malermi translation, which he had had printed for the first time by Giovanni Ragazzo in 1490.¹⁷ A quarter of the 384 illustrations in the Giunta Bible are inspired by Heinrich Quentel's Cologne Bible of 1478–1479. The vast majority of the images, however, are original work, and have been attributed by Lilian Armstrong

¹⁴ Rosier B.A., *The Bible in Print: Netherlandish Bible Illustration in the Sixteenth Century*, trans. C.F. Weterings, 2 vols. (Leiden: 1997) I 36, 269–273.

¹⁵ Baudrier J., *Bibliographie Lyonnaise. Recherches sur les imprimeurs, libraires, relieurs et fondeurs de lettres de Lyon au XVI^e siècle*, 13 vols. (Lyons – Paris: 1895–1950) XII 330–60. Cf. Delaveau M. – Hillard D. (eds.), *Bibles imprimées du XV^e au XVIII^e siècle conservées à Paris* (Paris: 2002) 135–140. Besides appearing in Sacon's Lyonnese bibles, copies after the illustrations under discussion were printed in several of Koberger's Nuremberg Latin bibles as well as in Friedrich Peypus' Latin Bible of 1524, also printed in Nuremberg.

¹⁶ Camerini P., *Annali dei Giunti*, Vol. I: *Venezia*, Biblioteca bibliographica Italica 26 (Florence: 1962) 147–149.

¹⁷ Barbieri E., *Le Bibbie italiane del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento. Storia e bibliografia ragionata delle edizioni in lingua italiana dal 1471 al 1600*, Grandi opere 4, 2 vols. (Milan: 1991–1992) II 219–221. This edition of the Italian translation of the Bible by Nicolò Malerbi (or Malermi) was subsequently reprinted several times by Giunta.

to an important Venetian illuminator known as the ‘Maestro di Pico’ or the ‘Pico Master’.¹⁸ The Italian-style woodcut vignettes had a profound influence on the history of book illustration and were, as already mentioned, adopted by Jacob Sacon for his Vulgate Bible. From 1518, Sacon began to replace the copies after Guinta’s woodcuts, which had in the meantime become old-fashioned, with new prints. These were the work of the Nuremberg artists, Erhard Schön and Hans Springinklee. Bart Rosier asserts that Lempereur’s designer had the woodcuts copied and adapted from Sacon’s 1521 edition,¹⁹ but it is possible that the edition of 1522 was used.²⁰

Lempereur in 1530 and 1534 and Vorsterman from 1532 onward, placed almost all the woodcuts of the Old Testament at the beginning of the chapters, and not adjacent to the passages they were illustrating.²¹ Gravius adhered even more slavishly to Lempereur’s Bible of 1530 than had Vorsterman, which leads Rosier to conclude that the Louvain edition, as far as its illustrations are concerned, is explicitly based on Lempereur’s Bible of 1530. When, for instance, Lempereur placed a woodcut next to the wrong text or used it again for another biblical passage, this is also found in Gravius’ Louvain Bible of 1548. It is noteworthy that Van Grave even followed his predecessor in using the same two woodcuts to portray the various prophets, positioning them precisely as had Lempereur. Even the Vorsterman Bible of 1532, the illustrations of which follow Lempereur’s Bible of 1530, does not cleave to its model as meticulously as does Gravius’ 1548 Bible. Among the illustrations from the Old Testament, the Louvain Bible deviates from Lempereur only twice: the origins of the woodcut depicting *The Six Days of Creation*, placed at the beginning of Genesis, are unknown,

¹⁸ See Armstrong L., “Il Maestro di Pico: Un miniatore Veneziano del tardo quattrocento”, *Saggi e memorie di storia dell’arte* 17 (1990) 7–39, esp. 27–30, 37.

¹⁹ In his freer copies, the designer of Lempereur’s woodcuts maintained the compositional schemes and meaningful visual elements of Sacon’s prints, but worked in his own style and according to his own vision, thereby creating ultimately a very personal interpretation (Rosier, *The Bible in Print* I 19).

²⁰ Rosier, *The Bible in Print* I 19–20, 84–85, 178–183; cf. ibidem II 39. Also: Strachan J., *Early Bible Illustrations: A Short Study Based on Some Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Century Printed Texts* (Cambridge: 1957) 25–35, and fig. 28; Poortman W.C., *Boekzaal van de Nederlandse Bijbels. Bijbel en Prent*, 2 vols. (The Hague: 1983) I 48–49, 93, 126.

²¹ Rosier, *The Bible in Print* I 121–122.

and a copy after Hans Holbein's *Icones*-print *Moses Receiving the Tablets of the Law*, illustrates Exodus 34.²²

The illustrations in the Louvain Bible's New Testament are limited to portraits of the evangelists and Paul. Matthew is a copy after Doen Pietersoen's 1522 octavo print that Vorsterman had first used for his New Testament of 1530(?), but which was not adopted by Lempereur. Bartholomeus van Grave used Vorsterman's block to print the Louvain Bible. The portraits of the evangelists Mark and John – the latter of which appears at the start of the gospel, I John and the Apocalypse – were printed from the blocks that Willem Vorsterman had first used for his 1528 Dutch Bible and Lempereur for his 1530 French Bible. These two evangelists had been copied after the prints in Hieronymus Fuchs' Dutch New Testament, printed in Cologne in 1525, which in turn were copied after prints by Hans Holbein the Younger. Luke, who belongs to the same series of blocks copied after Fuchs' prints, had first appeared in Vorsterman's Danish New Testament of 1529, before it was reused by Lempereur 1530.²³ It seems that Van Grave not only illustrated the New Testament with material that had originally belonged to Vorsterman, but also took inspiration from his Bible editions (in addition to those of Lempereur). The portrait of Paul that Gravius placed at the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans (duplicated at the beginning of the Epistle to Jude), turns out to be a portrait of his own design. The twenty-one illustrations to the Apocalypse that Lempereur included in his French Bible of 1530, were not used in the Louvain Bible of 1548, but these blocks reappear in the revised version of the Louvain Bible of 1553.²⁴

In summary, it is evident that Willem Vorsterman and Martin Lempereur, holders of privileges (1528 and 1530 respectively) licensing publication of the Bible in (semi-)official Dutch and French translations intended for the Low Countries, utilized copies of the illustrations that had previously appeared in the widely circulated Vulgate editions of Sacon and Giunta. Vorsterman and Lempereur also exchanged blocks. It is these blocks that Van Grave also used for the Louvain Bible of 1548, which, as the official Dutch Bible translation in the Low Countries, succeeded and supplanted the translation published by Vorsterman.

²² Rosier, *The Bible in Print* I 36.

²³ Rosier, *The Bible in Print* I 22, 62; cf. *ibidem* II 42.

²⁴ Rosier, *The Bible in Print* I 37.

It is therefore striking to discover the links between the Louvain Bible and the previous official (Vulgate) translations, with regard both to the statute of the text and the program of illustration. In this respect, too, a pattern of continuity can even be discerned that goes back to the Vulgate editions published before the Reformation. Even so, it would be going too far to speak of a canon of illustrations that were received as orthodox, for most if not all of these illustrations have no outspoken confessional colour and could be used indiscriminately in Catholic or Protestant bibles.²⁵ Nor can this principle be applied to the French Louvain Bible of 1550, where extensive use was made of Hans Holbein the Younger's *Icones* of 1538. Similarly, the revised version of the Dutch Louvain Bible of 1553 not only makes use of material from the edition of 1548, but also includes copies of Holbein's *Icones*, of the *Postilla* prints from Robert Estienne's Latin Bible of 1540, and of the famous Apocalypse illustrations after Holbein.

This brings us to the crucial question of function: what purpose did the illustrations serve in such editions as the Louvain Bible, apart from the printer's obvious commercial interest in putting a beautifully illustrated Bible on the market. Van Winghe's introductory "Instruction" emphasizes that the Bible must be interpreted correctly, but remains silent on the function of the images. It is obvious, however, that he must have considered the illustrations subservient to the biblical story: in the first place, they were intended to provide an orthodox visualization of the literal meaning. In contemplating the image, the believers, some of whom were barely educated, could imagine the heart of the biblical story.²⁶

It is well known that from the late Middle Ages, Old Testament scenes were often selected for illustration in bibles, and this practice continued to prevail in the Louvain Bible. These Old Testament scenes were construed as prefigurations of gospel events, and more specifically, of Christ and His Church. Medieval typology pairs 'Old Testament types with the New Testament anti-types they were seen to adumbrate', as Walter Melion formulates it.²⁷ Such typological connections were already described by the Church fathers and in the *Glossa ordinaria*, which offered a synthesis of the patristic tradition.

²⁵ Cf. Rosier, *The Bible in Print I* 117–119.

²⁶ Rosier, *The Bible in Print I* 84–87.

²⁷ Melion W.S., "Bible Illustration in the Sixteenth-Century Low Countries", in Clifton J. – Melion W.S. (eds.), *Scripture for the Eyes: Bible Illustration in Netherlandish Prints of the Sixteenth Century* (New York – London: 2009) 18.

Representations of Old Testament types and corresponding New Testament antitypes were also to be seen in block-books such as the *Biblia Pauperum* or the *Speculum humanae salvationis*. Throughout the Renaissance, humanists attempted to limit the use of such typological explanations and focus attention more fully on the literal-historical meaning of the sacred text. Typology remained popular in the early modern era all the same, especially in Catholic circles. Starting with the Vorsterman Bible of 1533–1534, which contains the same illustrations as our Louvain Bible, we find that annotations included in the margin clarify the typological relationships of many images (in addition to providing factual information).²⁸ These marginal notes are not retained in the Louvain Bible, although Nicolaus van Winghe in his “Instruction” explicitly recognizes that ‘the Old Testament is explained by the New Testament and vice-versa’,²⁹ and that this mutual relation supplies one of the hermeneutical instruments for understanding the Bible. We need not doubt, though, that Van Winghe was pessimistic regarding the capacity of lay people to apply such hermeneutics themselves. In order to fathom the mysteries of Scripture, lay people had need of mediators, in particular priests and preachers, who could explain the Bible in church, being themselves well-versed in the commentaries of the Fathers and doctors of the Church. That at least is the tenor of Van Winghe’s “Instruction”.³⁰

King Solomon Writing and Resting

I would like now to illustrate these points by recourse to a picture representing *King Solomon Writing and Resting*.³¹ Although this illustration is to be found at the start of Proverbs in the Louvain Bible and its predecessors,³² the main scene is obviously a visualization of *Canticle of Canticles* 3:7–11:

²⁸ Rosier, *The Bible in Print I* 88–89; Melion, “Bible Illustration in the Sixteenth-Century Low Countries” 18, 50–51.

²⁹ Van Winghe, *Onderwijs*, fol. B3v.

³⁰ François, “Het voorwoord bij de ‘Leuvense bijbel’” 35–38.

³¹ For other illustrations that feature Solomon and that are to be found in the bibles of Lempereur 1530ff. and Vorsterman 1532ff., see Melion, “Bible Illustration in the Sixteenth-Century Low Countries” 18–21.

³² An interesting material detail is the crack visible in the woodblock image of the 1548 Louvain Bible; this defect first appears clearly in the 1541 French Bible printed by Antoine des Gois, partly for Anthonis van der Haeghen and partly for Martin

Behold threescore valiant ones of the most valiant of Israel, surrounded the bed of Solomon? All holding swords, and most expert in war: every man's sword upon his thigh, because of fears in the night. King Solomon hath made him a litter of the wood of Libanus. The pillars thereof he made of silver, the seat of gold, the going up of purple: the midst he covered with charity for the daughters of Jerusalem. Go forth, ye daughters of Sion, and see king Solomon in the diadem, wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of the joy of his heart [Fig. 2].³³

In a somewhat unusual scene, we see at the right a seated ruler writing, who is identified as 'David'. Lempereur's woodcut, as used by Gravius, copies in mirror-image an illustration from Sacon's Lyonnese Vulgate editions [Fig. 3], which in their turn goes back to Giunta's Venetian Vulgate edition, first printed in 1511 [Fig. 4].³⁴ In the 1490 Italian Bible, the woodcut is incorporated into a beautiful architectonic frontispiece – with putti riding a horse at the bottom of the page – that provides the entrée into the second part of the Bible.³⁵ This image does not go back to a former version in the Cologne Bible, but is thought to be the original work of the above-mentioned 'Maestro di Pico'.³⁶ [Fig. 5] This master possibly found inspiration in an older pictorial and exegetical tradition, the sources of which remain difficult to identify.³⁷

The central subject-matter is Solomon resting upon his bed, surrounded by the sixty valiant men of Israel. This theme has a previous history in the pictorial and exegetical tradition. It may be found, for

Lempereur. The first traces of the hairline fracture that eventually became the crack in question, can be seen in the 1537 English Bible, printed by Mathias Crom for the publishers E.W. Whitchurch and R.G. Grafton.

³³ For a general introduction to the place of *Canticle of Canticles* in exegesis and the fine arts, see Matter E.A., *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: 1990); Engammare M., *Qu'il me baise des baisiers de sa bouche. Le Cantique des Cantiques à la Renaissance. Étude et bibliographie*, Travaux d'humanisme et renaissance 277 (Geneva: 1993); Baert B., "Je hebt mijn hart verwond". Hooglied in beeld", in Ausloos H. – Bossuyt I. (eds.), *Hooglied. Bijbelse liefde in beeld, woord en klank* (Louvain – Voorburg: 2008) 59–105.

³⁴ Strachan, *Early Bible Illustrations*, fig. 28; Kästner M., *Die Icônes Hans Holbeins des Jüngerer. Ein Beitrag zum graphischen Werk des Künstlers und zur Bibelillustration Ende des 15. und in der ersten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Heidelberg: 1985) I 297; II, figs. 674 and 675.

³⁵ Barbieri, *Le Bibbie italiane* II, tav. B 220; Donati L., "Il mistero della Bibbia italica (Venezia, 1490, 1492, 1494)", *La Bibliofilia. Rivista di Storia del Libro e di Bibliografia* 77 (1975) 93–104, esp. 98–99.

³⁶ Armstrong, "Il Maestro di Pico" 29.

³⁷ See in particular the well documented work of Lerchner K., *Lectulus floridus. Zur Bedeutung des Bettes in Literatur und Handschriftenillustration des Mittelalters*, *Pictura et Poesis* 6 (Cologne – Weimar – Vienna: 1993) 177–269.

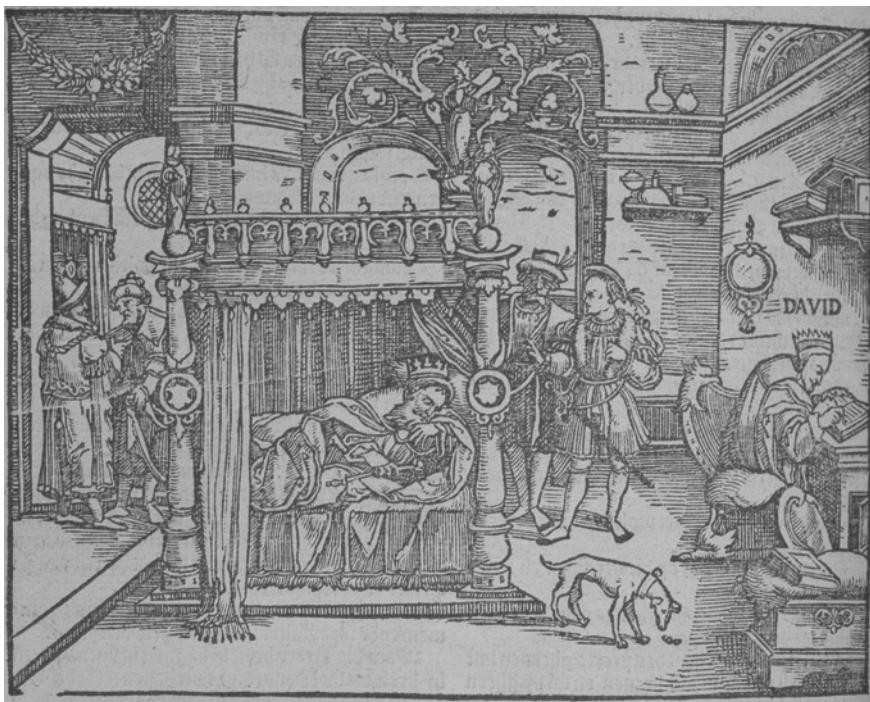


Fig. 2. *Solomon Writing and Resting*. Woodcut illustration to *Den gheheelen Bybel* [...] (Louvain, Bartholomeus van Grave: 1548). K.U. Leuven, Maurits Sabbe Library, P. 22.055.1/F°/Bijb 1548, fol. Pp 4v.

example, in two Byzantine manuscripts of the twelfth century, including homilies of the Holy Virgin written by the monk Jacobus Kokkinobaphos.³⁸ In all probability inspired by the Byzantine iconography,

³⁸ Paris MS Bibl. Nat. Grec 1208 and Rome MS Vatic. Grec 1162. The figure of Solomon on his bed, surrounded by the sixty valiant men of Israel, is also to be found in a depiction of Solomon's dream (I Kings 3:6–14, II Chronicles 1:7–12) in the Saint-Vaast Bible (Arras MS Bibl. Mun. 559), from the second quarter of the 11th century, in addition to two early 11th century Spanish bibles, the Roda Bible (Paris MS Bibl. Nat. Lat 6), and the Ripoll Bible (Rome MS Vatic. Lat 5729). The three latter bibles also include an image of Solomon's dream vision of the Lord, an element lacking from our depiction of Canticles 3:7. See Reilly D.J., *The Art of Reform in Eleventh-Century Flanders: Gerard of Cambrai, Richard of Saint-Vanne and the Saint-Vaast Bible*, Studies in the History of Christian Traditions 128 (Leiden: 2006) 196–209. Cf. Kerber B., art. "Salomo", in Kirschbaum E. et alii (eds.), *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie*, 8 vols. (Rome – Freiburg – Basel – Vienna: 1968–76) IV 20, in which reference is made to I Samuel 3:5–15.

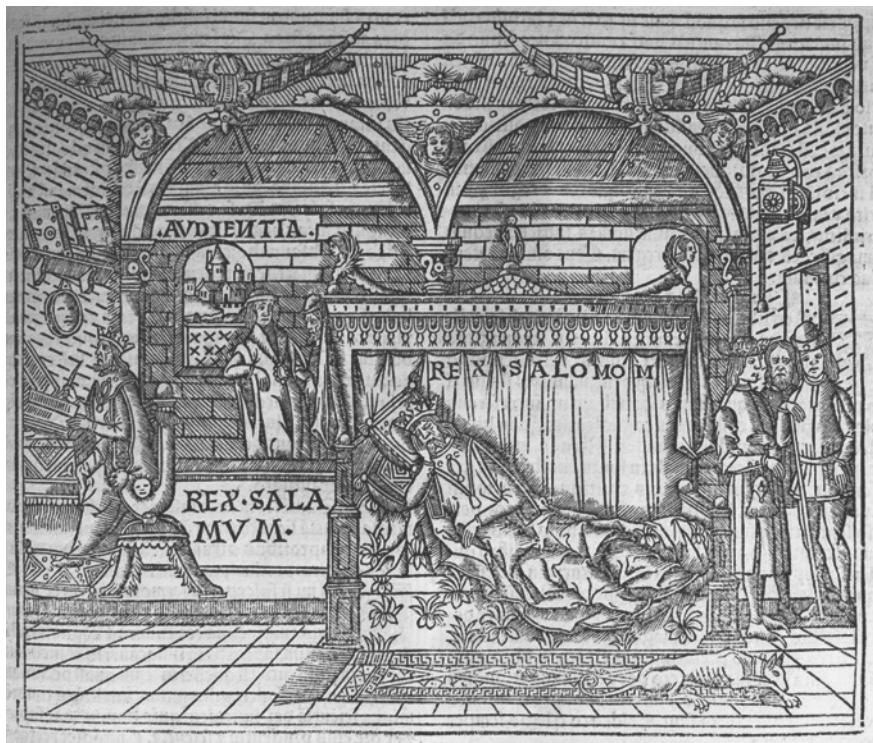


Fig. 3. *Solomon Writing and Resting*. Woodcut illustration to *Biblia cum summariorum apparatu* [...] (Lyons, Jacques Sacon: 1522). K.U. Leuven, Maurits Sabbe Library, P. 22.053.2/F°/Bijb 1522, fol. t 7r [= 151r].

we also find the image as the opening picture of the Solomon series in the famous illuminated manuscript, the *Hortus Deliciarum*, compiled by Herrad of Landsberg, the Abbess of the Hohenbourg monastery in the Alsace (end of the twelfth century, burnt and destroyed during the Siege of Strasbourg in 1870).³⁹ Although the image gives particular

³⁹ Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, ed. R. Green – M. Evans – C. Bischoff – M. Curschmann, 2 vols. (London – Leiden: 1979) I 336–340; Curschmann M., “Texte – Bilder – Strukturen. Der ‘Hortus deliciarum’ und die frühmittelhochdeutsche Geistlichendichtung (mit 10 Abbildungen)”, *Deutsche Vierteljahrsschrift für*

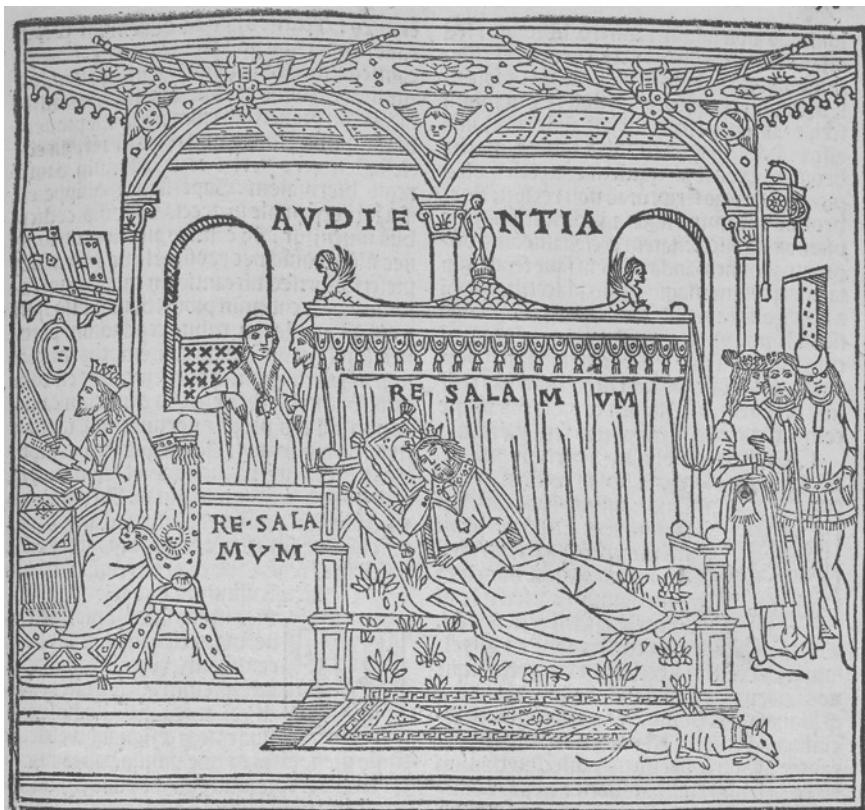


Fig. 4. Maestro di Pico, *Solomon Writing and Resting*. Woodcut illustration to *Biblia vulgare istoriata* [...] (Venice, LucAntonio de Giunta: 1511). © The British Library Board, IB 23752, fol. Yr.

expression to the literal meaning, the typological correspondences are explained in accompanying texts. In these, the *lectulus Salomonis* is designated a figurative image of the Church, in which peace reigns and Christ, the true Solomon, rests. The name Solomon is emphatically interpreted to mean 'man of peace', 'pacificus'. The sixty valiant men are seen as the doctors of the Church, who through their preaching of the Word protect the peace of Christ's Church from demons

Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte 55 (1981) 379–418, esp. 394–409; Lerchner, *Lectulus floridus* 248–262, esp. 254–256; also Cames G., *Allégories et symboles dans l'Hortus deliciarum* (Leiden: 1971) 74–75.

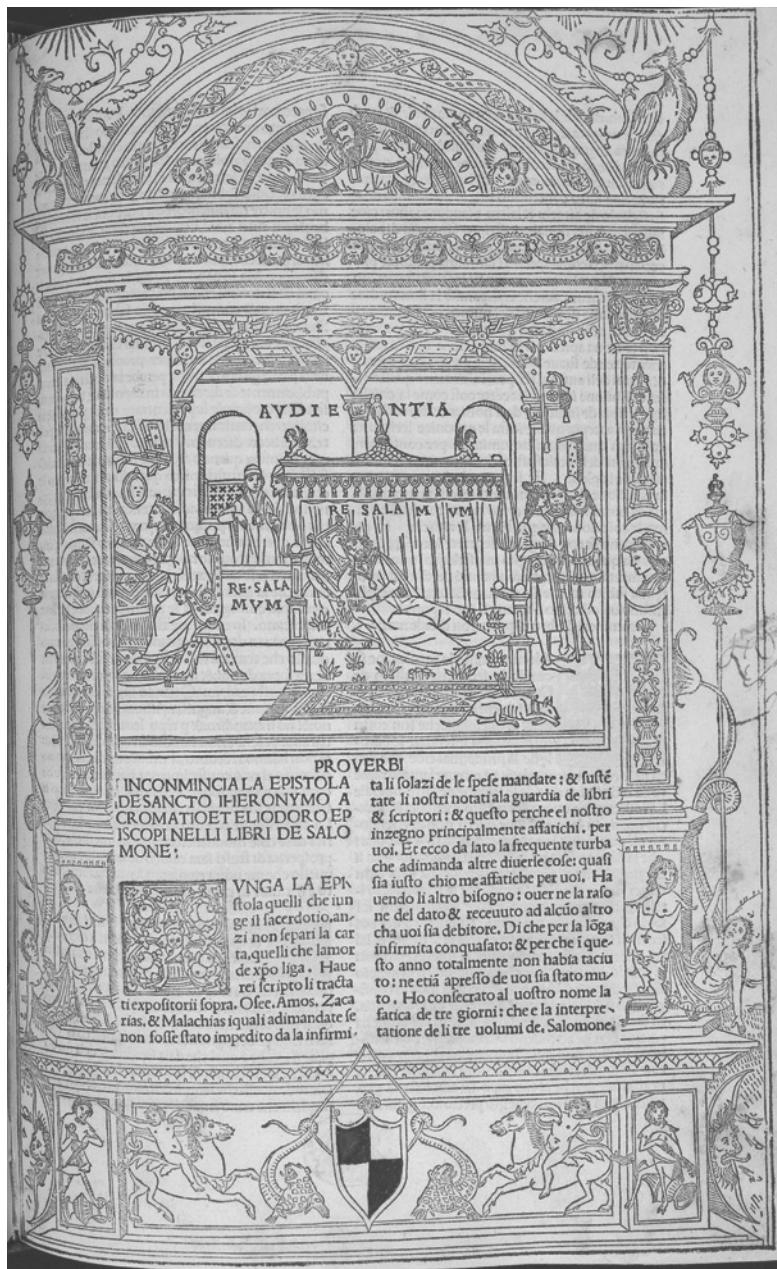


Fig. 5. Maestro di Pico, *Solomon Writing and Resting*. Woodcut illustration to the frontispiece of *Biblia vulgare istoriata* [...] (Venice, LucAntonio de Giunta: 1490). © The British Library Board, 3021.c.1, 2, fol. AA 1r.

and heretics. The sword that they hold is the sword of God's Word.⁴⁰ The text in these passages was very possibly inspired by the Canticle of Canticles commentary of Haimo of Auxerre (†ca. 855),⁴¹ who in turn made use of the very influential commentary of the Venerable Bede (†735), especially his ecclesiological explanation of Solomon's bed.⁴² The accompanying commentary⁴³ also refers to the Mariological interpretation of Canticle of Canticles by Rupert of Deutz (†1129),⁴⁴ who likens the bed to the virginal womb (*uterus virginialis*) wherein the divine nature of Christ was united with human nature.

We also find Solomon resting on his *lectulus floridus* (*Canticles* 1:15), amidst the sixty valiant men of Israel, in the Solomon cycle of the famous block-book of the Canticle of Canticles, printed in the Netherlands ca. 1465 [Fig. 6].⁴⁵ The iconography of the block-book's pictures correlates to a fresco cycle of thirty-two scenes from or relating to the Canticle of Canticles in the church of the Cistercian convent at Chelmno (Poland) and datable to the mid-fourteenth century.⁴⁶ The

⁴⁰ Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, ed. Green et alii, vol. I, fol. 205r, no. 710, p. 337.

⁴¹ Haimo of Auxerre, *Enarratio in Canticum Canticorum*, ed. J.-P. Migne, PL 117 (Paris Petit-Montrouge: 1852) 312A-C; cf. Curschmann, "Texte – Bilder – Strukturen. Der 'Hortus deliciarum'" 399. In his commentary on the *Hortus*-reconstruction, Curschmann reiterates the view that the passage derives from the *summarium Heinrici*, a condensed and reorganized version of Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies*, but he revises this view in his later article; cf. Curschmann M., "The German Glosses", in Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, ed. Green et alii, II 63–80, esp. 65.

⁴² Venerable Bede, *In Cantica Canticorum*, 1,1,15; 2,3,7–9, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 119B (Turnhout: 1983) 208–209, 237–240. Cf. Lerchner, *Lectulus floridus* 250.

⁴³ Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, ed. Green et alii, vol. I, fol. 205r–205v, no. 711, pp. 337–338.

⁴⁴ Rupert of Deutz, *In Canticum Canticorum*, 3,7–8, ed. H. Haacke, CCCM 26 (Turnhout: 1974) 61–65.

⁴⁵ Engammare M., "Das Blockbuch 'Canticum canticorum' – die erste Serie von Abbildungen des Hohenliedes", in Mertens S. et alii (eds.), *Blockbücher des Mittelalters. Bilderfolgen als Lektüre. Gutenberg-Museum, Mainz, 22. Juni 1991 bis 1. September 1991* (Mainz am Rhein: 1991) 319–327; also Petev T., "Typology and Format in the Netherlandish Blockbook *Canticum canticorum*, ca. 1465", *Visual Resources* 13 (1998) 331–361. There are a number of publications of this block-book, amongst others: *Canticum Canticorum. Facsimile druk van de 15^e eeuwse Zuidnederlandse blokboek*, ed. A.J.J. Delen – M. Meertens (Antwerp: 1949), and *Le Cantique des cantiques, Canticum canticorum. Historia seu Providentia Beatae Mariae Virginis ex Canto canticorum. Les Chefs d'œuvre de la xylographie*, ed. F. Bouvet (Paris: 1961).

⁴⁶ Bartal R., "'Where has your Beloved Gone?': The Staging of the *Quae rerum Deum* on the Murals of the Cistercian Convent at Chelmno", *Word & Image* 16 (2000) 270–289; Hamburger J.F., *The Rothschild Canticles: Art and Mysticism in Flanders and the Rhineland circa 1300* (New Haven CT – London: 1990) 85–87. See the latter publication for references to the Polish literature.

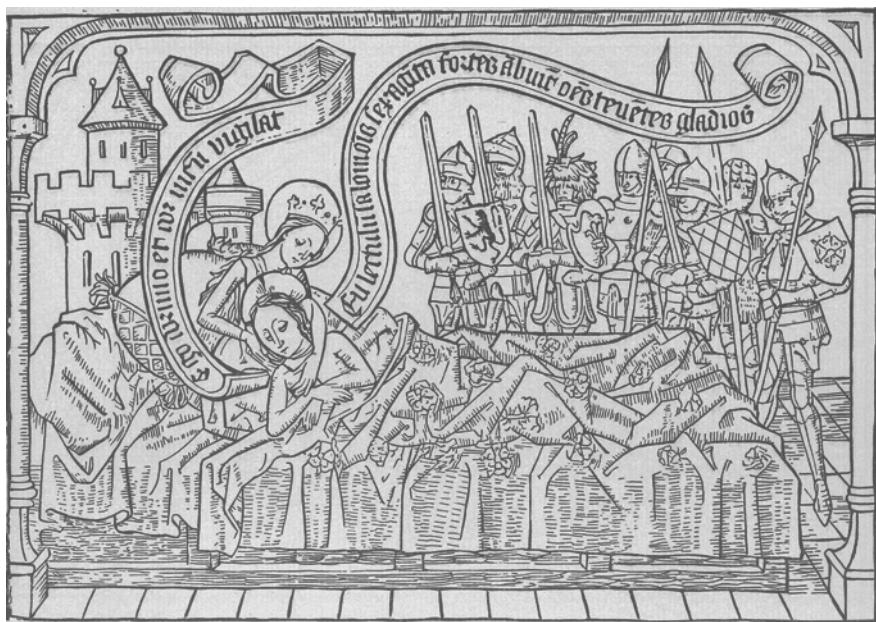


Fig. 6. *Solomon on his Flowered Bed*. Woodcut illustration to a Netherlandish block-book of the *Canticle of Canticles* (ca. 1465). Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Xylogr 32, bildnr 22 unten.

banderole at the right of the page contains a short passage from *Canticles* 3:7, that on the left a passage from *Canticles* 5:2 ('I sleep and my heart watches'). It is worth noting how the bride is portrayed: she half sits on the bed and embraces the sleeping bridegroom. In the tradition of the block-books, we should expect to recognize a typological application here. The resting Solomon is the figurative image of Christ. The bride probably represents the loving soul, with Mary implicitly evoked as the supreme example of a pure and virtuous soul. Their meeting on the bed signifies the mystical union between Christ and the soul.⁴⁷ This block-book is meant to inspire the viewer (probably a nun) to the imitation of Mary, in order that the gifts of grace bestowed on her may to some measure be attained by the individual soul. The motif of the

⁴⁷ Lerchner, *Lectulus floridus* 264–269. Petev, "Typology and Format" 351, also refers to resemblances to portrayals of the Pietà.

bride sitting upon Solomon's bed is unusual and, according to Max Engammare, was possibly inspired by the Mariological commentary on the Canticle of Canticles written by the Dutch theologian and spiritual writer Denys the Carthusian (†1471).⁴⁸

In the Renaissance, the typological tradition of the late Middle Ages, as expressed in glosses and commentaries and visualised in block-books, began to decline in importance. Humanists paid more attention to the literal-historical sense of the Bible (and other classical forms of literature), and this change of emphasis led to a demand for Bible books that offered the bare text of the Scriptures and included images illustrating the literal-historical sense of the text.⁴⁹ In the new spirit of humanism and Renaissance, the Maestro di Pico offered a particularly literal development of the theme of Solomon resting on his flowered bed (*lectulus floridus*) [Figs. 4–5]. But there are other novel features to be discerned: the humanistic interest in classical authorship brings the Maestro di Pico to picture Solomon as the intellectual writer of the biblical books of wisdom – *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and the *Canticle of Canticles*. In the image, we see how two of these texts, bound into codices, stand ready on the shelf above the writing table. Solomon is working on the third book, without a doubt the *Canticle of Canticles*. The composition of this picture is determined by its function as a sort of entryway into all of the Solomonic wisdom literature, beginning with *Proverbs*, the book that initiates the second part of LucAntonio di Giunta's vernacular Bible. Regarding the development of the motif of the writing Solomon, we can easily identify the model used by the Maestro di Pico. He was surely inspired by the *Tavola di Salomone*, a picture made in 1489 by Nicolo de Balager, 'détto Castilia', which was inserted into the perpetual calendar now preserved in the *Archives of the State* in Venice⁵⁰ [fig. 7]. Here Solomon is pictured as a learned astrologer and a chronologer, that is, a measurer of the time. (Note the hanging clock that also appears in many of the later pictures.) It even seems as though the Maestro di Pico has extended the *Tavola di*

⁴⁸ Engammare, "Das Blockbuch 'Canticum canticorum'" 324–325. Comp. Denys the Carthusian, *Enarratio in Canticum Cantic.* – 1,5; 3,10–11, Opera omnia 7 (Montreuil: 1898) 327, 356–363.

⁴⁹ Baert, "Je hebt mijn hart verwond" 86.

⁵⁰ Donati, "Il mistero della Bibbia italica" 99–100. Cf. Prince d'Essling [=Masséna V.], *Les livres à figures vénitiens de la fin du XV^e siècle et du commencement du XVI^e*, Vol. I/1: *Ouvrages imprimés de 1450 à 1490 et leurs éditions successives jusqu'à 1525*, Études sur l'art de la gravure sur bois à Venise (Florence: 1907; anast. 1967) 290 n.



Fig. 7. Nicolo de Balager 'detto Castilia', *Tavola di Salomone*. Woodcut illustration to a perpetual calendar (ca. 1489). Venice, Archivio di Stato. [Printed in Donati L., "Il mistero della Bibbia italica [Venezia, 1490, 1492, 1494]", *La Bibliofilia. Rivista di Storia del Libro e di Bibliografia*, 77 (1975) 93–104, fig. 11].

Salomone, placing Solomon writing at left, the pendant clock above at right, and inserted between them, Solomon resting upon his bed amidst his audience.

And although no typological correspondences are made explicit, the bringing together of the resting and the writing Solomon creates a whole new set of meanings. The bed – a figure used by the Fathers to signify that which brings rest and peace to mankind – represents

contemplative proximity to God, whence derives the wisdom that Solomon subsequently commits to Scripture. In this new setting, the valiant of Israel, shown without swords, and the daughters of Jerusalem are transformed into a peaceful audience for Solomon's wise words.⁵¹ The atmosphere of peaceful contemplation and the writer's concentration are underscored by the presence of the somnolent dog: just like the valiant of Israel, who have laid down their swords, the dog has no reason to be on its guard against any danger. The whole scene breathes calm, contemplation and reflection.⁵² The typological connection between the bed and Scripture also derives from the patristic and early medieval tradition: to cite one example, in the aforementioned commentary on the Canticle of Canticles by Rupert of Deutz,⁵³ that was most likely included in the *Hortus Deliciarum*.⁵⁴ It is however very uncertain whether the humanist Maestro di Pico was conscious of this typological connection when he designed the picture and even more doubtful whether viewers would have made the connection.

An interesting detail is the mirror above the writing table. The mirror is not an unambiguous symbol in the Renaissance: since it reflects truly whatever is placed before it, leaving nothing undisclosed, it stands for wisdom, but the mirror can also refer to worldly vanity and even to magic and divination.⁵⁵ In the image under consideration, the

⁵¹ In this illustration, Lamberto Donati simply saw the court of Solomon, where people gather to appeal to his wisdom in settling disputes and problems; see Donati, "Il mistero della Bibbia italic" 99–100. Also: Barbieri E., "Le edizioni illustrate della Bibbia volgare [1490–1517]: appunti sulle immagini di traduttori", *La Bibliofilia. Rivista di storia del libro e di bibliografia* 92 (1990) 1–21, esp. 11–12.

⁵² Cf. Chastel A., *Le mythe de la Renaissance 1420–1520*, Art, idées, histoire (Geneva: [1969]) 167–169, where the author describes the Renaissance depiction of the savant in his study room or 'studiolo'.

⁵³ Rupert of Deutz, *In Canticum Canticorum* 3,9–10, ed. Haacke, CCCM 26, 65–67. The bed signifying the Scriptures appears also in Theodoret of Cyrus, *In Canticum Cantic. Lib. II* 3,7–8, ed. Migne J.-P., PG 81 (Paris Petit-Montrouge: 1864) 122c–d. Cf. Lerchner, *Lectulus floridus* 232–234, 251.

⁵⁴ Rupert of Deutz, *In Canticum Canticorum* 3,9–10,11, in Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, ed. Green et al. I, fol. 210r–v, no. 718, pp. 343–344.

⁵⁵ Cf. Holl O., art. "Spiegel", in Kirschbaum et alii (eds.), *Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie* 4 (1972) 188–190. The mirror may indeed have a 'reverse side'. Solomon, after all, can also function as a negative exemplum, for he succumbed to the influence of heathen women, who eventually led him to idolatry and the occult sciences (even today 'mirror of Solomon' is a popular name for a 'magic mirror', used for purposes of witchcraft and divination). Solomon, having repented, became convinced of the vanity of worldly things. According to a view circulated widely in the Middle Ages, he wrote Ecclesiastes, his second book, as penance for his faults, after Proverbs and before Canticle of Canticles. In the *Hortus Deliciarum*, Solomon's susceptibility to worldly vanity

unstained mirror, clearly reflecting all things, most probably refers to *Wisdom* 7:26, according to which Wisdom is the ‘the unspotted mirror of God’s majesty’. Because of the paraphrase of *Wisdom* 7:26 in *Hebrews* 1:3, the early Church fathers saw Wisdom personified in Christ.⁵⁶ Later in the Middle Ages, the feminine personification of Wisdom (*Sapientia*) was considered a prefiguration of the unspotted, immaculate virgin (e.g., in Jacopo da Voragine’s *Mariale* of 1497). But it is again highly uncertain whether our Venetian Renaissance artist purposely aimed at evoking these Christological and/or Mariological connections. More probably, he was making a pictorial reference to the Solomonic book of *Wisdom* 7:26, and to the meaning given there.

Whatever the case, the Maestro di Pico brought the motifs of the resting and the writing Solomon together in a new composition that draws on older pictorial and exegetical tradition, in the new spirit of humanism and the Renaissance. This was transmitted by means of the bibles of LucAntonio di Giunta, and from 1512 in those of Jacob Sacon [Fig. 3]. Erhard Schön had not as yet made a more modern version for the Sacon Bible,⁵⁷ when Lempereur made use of this image. Lempereur’s designer puts forward his own adapted version of the Giunta – Sacon picture. From this modernization, we can draw a few interpretative conclusions. In the first place, we note that the flowers have disappeared so that there is no longer any trace of the *lectulus floridus*. More striking, Solomon’s bed of rest has been extended by the addition of two great columns. This evokes the image of the temple built by Solomon, although it is perhaps uncertain whether the artist wished to call forth this association. Even more uncertain is whether he wished to present the temple of Solomon as a figurative image of the Church of Christ; this typological reading can be found in the Venerable Bede’s Homily on *John* 10:22–30, written for the feast of the dedication of a church. This text circulated widely in the Church, and it was included

is expressed by way of a puppet show and the wheel of fortune. See Cames, *Allégories et symboles dans l’Hortus deliciarum* 83–87; Lerchner, *Lectulus floridus* 248, 252, 261; Curschmann, “Texte – Bilder – Strukturen. Der ‘Hortus deliciarum’” 395 and 407.

⁵⁶ On the Scriptures as a mirror, see Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos cIII*, s. 1,4, eds. E. Dekkers – J. Fraipont, CCSL 40 (Turnhout: 1956) 1476 l. 19–26.

⁵⁷ This new version does not make an appearance until the Nuremberg Vulgate edition of Friedrich Peypus of 1530. See Strauss W.L. (ed.), *German masters of the Sixteenth Century: Erhard Schoen, Niklas Stoer, The Illustrated Bartsch* 13 (New York: 1984) no. 1301.058a.

in the *Hortus Deliciarum*⁵⁸ A second change in Lempereur's image relates to the audience. There is no trace left of the daughters of Jerusalem, and the audience consists entirely of men. Moreover, they look less peaceable than in the Giunta-Sacon picture, and one of them is clearly carrying a sword. The valiant men of Israel, holding swords, stand guard around the bed, guarding the peace of King Solomon. The designer may have intended figuratively to represent the preachers who defend the peace of the Church against heretics, by wielding the sword of God's Word. This ecclesiological interpretation goes back once again to the Venerable Bede, whose influential ecclesiological interpretation was taken up by Haimo of Auxerre and Alcuin (†804). The typological correspondences discerned by the Church Fathers are also strongly present in the *Glossa ordinaria*.⁵⁹ The state of increased watchfulness is signalled by the dog, which has woken from its sleep, although it does not seem at all aggressive. Even if it remains possible that the religious unrest threatening the peace of the Church inspired the designer to allude to the theme of vigilance, his image is still a relatively literal illustration of *Canticles* 3:7–11 (in particular, of Solomon resting on his bed, surrounded by the sixty valiant men of Israel).

I would like to point out a third, striking development in Lempereur: perhaps motivated by his concern to present a literal image of the scene described in *Canticles* 3:7–11, the writing ruler he illustrates is no longer identified as Solomon, as in the Giunta – Sacon bibles, but instead as David. Solomon the occupier of the bed of rest and Solomon the inspired writer of wisdom literature, are no longer connected with each other, and David now takes his son's place as the interpreter of God's Word. Bart Rosier mentions that it is nonetheless the iconography of the Giunta – Sacon bibles that remained more familiar and

⁵⁸ Venerable Bede, *Homilia 2, 24: In dedicatione Ecclesiae*, ed. Hurst D., CCSL 122 (Turnhout: 1955), amongst others 364 l. 231 – 365 l. 258. This text was included in the *Hortus Deliciarum* bearing the title *De tribus dedicationibus templi* (Herrad of Hohenbourg, *Hortus Deliciarum*, ed. Green et alii 1; fol. 208r–208v, no. 716, pp. 339–340).

⁵⁹ See, amongst others, Venerable Bede, *In Cantica Canticorum*, 1,1,15; 2,3,7–9, ed. Hurst, CCSL 119B, 208 l. 713 – 209 l. 729 ('lectulus floridus'), 237–240; Haimo of Auxerre, *Enarratio in Cantica Canticorum*, ed. Migne, PL 117 301A–B ('lectulus floridus'), 311D–313A; Alcuin, *Compendium in Canticum Canticorum*, ed. J.-P. Migne, PL 100 (Paris Petit-Montrouge: 1863) 650A–C; *Glossa ordinaria in Canticum Canticorum* 1,15; 3,7–11, ed. M. Dove, CCCM 170 (Turnhout: 1997) 135, 210–223. Also see this edition for the references to Anselm of Laon. Cf. Lerchner, *Lectulus floridus* 180–181, 210–213; Cames, *Allégories et symboles dans l'Hortus deliciarum* 79.

widespread: King Solomon is more often than not depicted writing.⁶⁰ David is seldom portrayed as a king at his writing, but rather as a poet and psalmist, and his usual attribute, not surprisingly, is a harp.⁶¹ In Lempereur's picture, not only has the inscription 'David' been added above the writing figure, the throne has also been given the shape of a harp, its silhouette echoing that of the instrument at David's feet. In place of the three original books, there are now at least five books visible, possibly an allusion to the parts into which the book of Psalms is traditionally divided.

The new reading Lempereur's Bible offers of an established image, is further developed in a marginal gloss that Willem Vorsterman attached to this illustration from 1533–34 onward [Fig. 8]. A possible implicit typological relationship is perhaps made explicit, although this is not necessarily the interpretation originally intended by the artist. Vorsterman, who had a well-developed sense for business, was undoubtedly responding to demand from his readership, among whom typology had remained popular. The image is first construed as a representation ('figure') of Solomon's peaceful empire.⁶² The glossator then aligns himself with medieval typology, presenting Solomon also as a figurative image of Christ: in his serene peace, but particularly in his wisdom and in his building of the temple (the Church), Solomon is a figurative image of the eternal wisdom of Jesus Christ. And the gloss concludes that it is for this reason that he is called 'Solomon', explained here as 'peaceful' or 'peace making'.⁶³ The question remains whether the writer of the gloss was inspired by a specific commentary or – the likelier case – provided an *ad hoc* summary based on the patristic and medieval commentary tradition as reflected in the *Glossa ordinaria*, among other sources.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ We also find an image of a writing Solomon in the 1526 Liesvelt Bible. However, I do not see any connection between this image and the picture of *King Solomon Writing and Resting*, as it first appears in Lempereur's 1530 French Bible.

⁶¹ Rosier, *The Bible in Print* I 109.

⁶² An interpretation close to that of the Venerable Bede, *Homilia 2, 24: In dedicacione Ecclesiae*, ed. Hurst, CCSL 122, 364 l. 231–365 l. 250.

⁶³ *Den Bibel. Tgeheele Oude ende Nieuwe Testament met grooter naersticheyt naden Latijnschen text gecorrigiert [...] (Antwerp, Willem Vorsterman: 1533–34) fol. Eii v:* 'Figure van dat vreedsamich rije van coninc Salomon de welcke in gerusticheyt/ende bovenal in wijsheyt ende int timmeren des tempels is geweest een figuer van de eeuwige wijsheyt Christi Jesu/waerom dat hi hiet Salomon dat is vreedsamich oft vrede makende'.

⁶⁴ See, among others, Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 17,8, ed. B. Dombart – A. Kalb, CCSL 48 (Turnhout: 1955) 571 l. 50–56; Beda Venerabilis, *In Cantica Canticorum*, 1,1,1, ed. Hurst, CCSL 119B, 190 l. 1–3; cf. *Glossa ordinaria in Canticum Canticorum*,



Fig. 8. *Solomon Writing and Resting*. Woodcut illustration to *Den Bibel. Tgeheele Oude ende Nieuwe Testament [...] (Antwerp, Willem Vorsterman: 1533–1534)*. K.U. Leuven, Mauritius Sabbe Library, P 22.055.1/F°/Bijb 1533–34, 2, fol. E 3r.

What is in any case striking, is that the commentary emerges at the moment (the 1530s) when Willem van Branteghem (†1553) came to live in the charterhouse of Kiel near Antwerp, and began his collaboration with Martin Lempereur and Willem Vorsterman; this resulted in the publication of several meditative books in which biblical images were accompanied by typological explanations. The *Pomarium mysticum* and its French version, *Le Vergier spirituel* (both published by

ed. Dove, CCCC 170, 77. There is no demonstrable link with Nicholas of Lyra's *Postilla*.

Vorsterman in 1535),⁶⁵ in Dutch *Een gheestelijc boomgaert* (Vorsterman, 1536), offered 92 full-page woodcuts of mainly New Testament scenes, based on earlier prints by Albrecht Dürer, Hans Sebald Beham, and other German masters. In 1535, the Antwerp printer Symon Cock published the *Enchiridion, compluscula eorum quae in veteris testamenti [sic] sacris Bibliis traduntur, picturis expressa continens*, in addition to Dutch and French versions, offering copies of the Old Testament pictures after Hans Sebald Beham's *Biblische Historien*. The (typological) commentaries accompanying the aforementioned pictures were written by Willem Van Branteghem.⁶⁶ Whether Willem van Branteghem had earlier contributed to the commentaries in the Vorsterman Bible of 1533–34 needs further confirmation.

For the sake of completeness, it should be added that Henrick Peetersen van Middelburch has had 'fairly coarse, yet faithful copies' made of the Old Testament illustrations in Lempereur's 1530 and 1534 editions, as well as in Vorsterman's 1532 and 1534 bibles.⁶⁷ These illustrations, of course, include our image of *Solomon Writing and Resting* [Fig. 9]. The text of Peetersen van Middelburch's 1535 Bible incorporated that of Jacob van Liesvelt's 1534 Bible, which was largely based on the Luther Bible. Van Middelburch even inserted a "Table" into the introductory material, in which every Bible passage, from both the Old Testament and the New, is described by means of a summary sentence, followed by a reference to its location. Some of these descriptions exuded an outspoken Protestant spirit. In his 1541 Bible edition, Henrick Peetersen van Middelburch, abandoned Liesvelt's text and adopted that of Vorsterman's edition of 1533–34. The typological explanation of our Solomon picture occurs in the margin of the 1541 edition, but not in that of 1535.

⁶⁵ Valerius Andreas even mentions a (French) version, edited in 1533 and issued by Martin Lempereur: Andreas Valerius, *Bibliotheca Belgica: de Belgis vita scriptisque claris. praemissa topographica Belgii totius seu Germaniae Inferioris descriptione* (Louvain, Jacob Zegers: 1643; repr. Nieuwkoop: 1973) 308.

⁶⁶ On Willem van Branteghem, see, amongst others, Melion W.S., "From Mystical Garden to Gospel Harmony: Willem van Branteghem on the Soul's Conformation to Christ", in Melion W.S. – Guiderdoni-Bruslé A. – Dekoninck R. (eds.), *The Meditative Image in Northern Art, 1500–1700*, Proteus Series (Turnhout: 2011), forthcoming. See there for further literature.

⁶⁷ Rosier, *The Bible in Print I* 26.

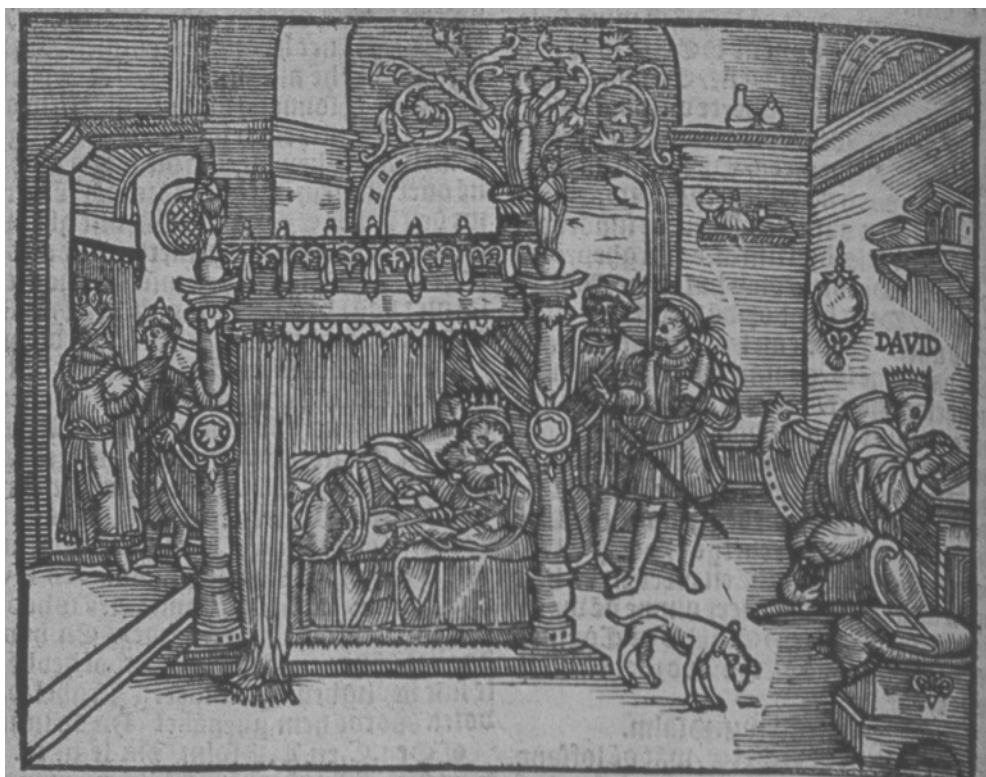


Fig. 9. *Solomon Writing and Resting*. Woodcut illustration to *Den Bibel. Tgeheele Oude en de Nyeuwe Testament [...]* (Antwerp, Henrick Peetersen van Middelburch: 1535). Amsterdam UB, Ned. Inc. 131, 1, fol. C 4v.

Conclusion

The aforementioned typological explanations were suppressed in the Louvain Bible of 1548, which leads us to a number of conclusions about the relationship between text, paratext and images in such an official vernacular Bible edition. First, the Catholic authorities only tolerated bibles offering the bare text of the Vulgate, without the addition of any explanatory paratextual elements. Secondly, the image of Solomon as such, and by extension the whole pictorial program, fitted perfectly with what a vernacular Catholic Bible in the middle of the sixteenth century was supposed to show. It follows the tradition that extends from the Vulgate editions of Lucantonio di Giunta to those of

Jacob Sacon, Martin Lempereur, Willem Vorsterman, and Bartholomeus van Grave, although – and this must be emphasized – such a strict Vulgate pedigree was not necessary with regard to the images. By far the largest share of the Bible illustrations in that period had no outspoken confessional colour and could be used without scruple in Catholic (but also in humanist or Protestant) Bibles, since these images sought primarily to fix the literal-historical sense of Scripture in the minds of the faithful. As a kind of descriptive record, illustrations included in Bible editions had to offer a depiction of the literal-historical sense of the text passage they portrayed. Such illustrations would seem to serve a purpose different from those in late medieval block-books or late sixteenth-century emblem books, in which typological associations are clearly utilized. It is therefore important to distinguish between several literary genres, before establishing the status of a biblical image. The question remains open, as to what extent artists and spectators continued to operate as they had formerly, when all created things and spaces were seen to signify the un-created spiritual order. And although individual artists or readers may indeed have been capable of making typological connections on their own, this kind of interpretive labor was left principally to ministers of the (Catholic) Church. Their vocation required them to explain both biblical text and image in a manner consistent with the authoritative tradition of the Church. As ministers of the Church, they acted as the necessary mediators between the Word of God, laid down in Scripture, and lay congregants. In order to encourage clerical competence in the area of biblical knowledge, the Emperor had even established in 1546 a royal chair for the study of Holy Scripture at Louvain.

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III. READING SCRIPTURE THROUGH IMAGES

ELOQUENT PRESENCE: VERBAL AND VISUAL DISCOURSE IN THE GHENT PLAYS OF 1539

Bart Ramakers

The theatre scholar who aims to reconstruct that which could have been seen during the historical staging of a play faces a difficult task. After all, in the vast majority of cases he must rely on source material of a textual nature: scripts. Thus, the reconstruction and interpretation of historical staging, or rather, of the diversity of staging that could have been realised based on these scripts, is necessarily a matter of reading and description rather than of viewing and image (or hearing and sound). The situation may be compared to basing an art-historical interpretation of a painting on *ekphrasis* only, without being able at the same time to present (a reproduction of) a sculpture, a painting or a print. It would soon become tiresome. And yet, this is exactly what this essay sets out to provide: description and analysis of the action in two historical plays, where we talk not just about *what* is heard onstage, but also about *how* what could be heard on stage was *said*, and *what* could be *seen* at the same time, in terms of organisation and use of the stage, of set pieces and props, of the movement and actions of characters, their facial expressions and gestures, their costume and attributes, in short, everything that defines the essence of theatre and drama.

This approach constitutes the means to an interpretative end, focusing attention more fully than heretofore on the effect and purpose of selected plays, in particular on two *spelen van zinne* or *zinnespelen*. *Zinnespelen* were allegorical plays traditional to the *rederijkers* (rhetoricians), the main practitioners of vernacular literature in the sixteenth-century Low Countries.¹ They were performed during the famous rhetoricians' contest held in Ghent in 1539. As was usual during such gatherings, the plays had to answer a question provided in advance.

¹ About this genre, see Ramakers B., "Dutch Allegorical Theatre. Tradition and Conceptual Approach", in Happé P. – Strietman E. (eds.), *Urban Theatre in the Low Countries 1400–1625* (Turnhout: 2006) 127–147.

In this case, that question was: ‘What is the greatest comfort for man dying?’. The plays in question are contributions by the chambers of rhetoric (the institutions in which the rhetoricians were organised) from Kaprijke and Antwerp, two of a total of nineteen chambers (from as many towns) participating in the contest.²

The choice of these two plays has to do specifically with supposed differences between them.³ These concern, firstly, their theological orientation. While the Kaprijke play is seen as Catholic, the Antwerp play is considered Protestant. They also differ with respect to dramaturgy. The first makes a somewhat old-fashioned impression due to a number of typical, mostly visual, features deriving from the tradition of the medieval morality play, while the second is seen as having a humanistic character due to its predominantly argumentative nature. The differences in form and religious tenor may be connected to their origin: in the larger city of Antwerp, innovations in religious and literary fields arrived much earlier than in the smaller town of Kaprijke. Finally, the Antwerp playwright seems to be better educated (or at least more of an intellectual) than his colleague from Kaprijke. And yet, both authors – probably both were laymen – evince a humanistic orientation through their considerable knowledge of the Bible. At the same time, their plays demonstrate a desire for inwardness,⁴ which is hard to reconcile with the interest in theology, generally attributed to the playwrights of the Ghent plays. This article contends that both plays arose within an experiential religious culture, still largely unstudied, peculiar to the sixteenth-century Low Countries, which was inspired by humanism and exemplified by extensive Biblical knowledge, Christ-centred interiority, a reliance on faith and an emphasis on God’s grace, and avowed loyalty to the Church.⁵

² Erné B.H. – Dis L.M. van (eds.), *De Gentse Spelen van 1539*, 2 vols. (The Hague: 1982) vol. I 269–301 (Antwerp); vol. II 435–468 (Kaprijke). On the history of the rhetoricians’ movement in the Southern Netherlands, see Bruaene A. – L. Van, *Om beters wille. Rederijkerskamers en de stedelijke cultuur in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden (1400–1650)* (Amsterdam: 2008).

³ Erné B.H. – Dis L.M. van (eds.), *De Gentse Spelen* vol. I 273–276 (Antwerp); vol. II 438–440 (Kaprijke).

⁴ Bryan J., *Looking Inward. Devotional Reading and the Private Self in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: 2008) 36–42, and *passim*.

⁵ This tradition has been studied for England; see Wooding L.E.C., *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (Oxford: 2000) 8, and *passim*.

Theology versus Devotion

Taking into account that they were printed after the fact, and that the Brussels authorities placed the majority of them on the index due to suspected heterodoxy, it is not at all surprising that literary historians, and historians even more so, have concentrated in their analysis of the Ghent plays on the religious points of view they ostensibly put forward, placing them on a scale ranging from Protestant to Catholic, even calling Protestant authors thus identified ‘reformers on stage’.⁶ After all, the allegorical drama of the rhetoricians is of a primarily persuasive, didactic nature. It was written and performed to influence the spectators, modifying their beliefs, values and attitudes, in order to achieve social, political, educational, theological, catechetical, moral and devotional ends. Due to the use of personifications, they offer every opportunity to map the many terms and ideas expressed in the names of these personifications and their interaction. Because of their predominantly argumentative character, a logocentric approach is even more appropriate in the case of competition plays such as those performed in Ghent. Thus, the establishment of the plays’ theological orientation may be considered to be a matter of words only.

Yet there is a problem with this search for controversial positions and with the way in which this is carried out. Play competitions such as the one held in Ghent were meant to exchange thoughts in a Ciceronian manner, more or less on the basis of an agreement to disagree. For the interpretation of the plays, this means that they cannot simply be attributed the intent of practising propaganda for the one or

⁶ Waite G.K., *Reformers on Stage. Popular Drama and Religious Propaganda in the Low Countries of Charles V, 1515–1556* (Toronto etc.: 2000) esp. 147–157; Pettegree A., *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge: 2005). The mentioned approach has been most fully explored in Drewes J.B., “Het interpreteren van godsdienstige spelen van zinne”, *Jaarboek Koninklijke Soevereine Hoofdkamer “De Fonteine” te Gent* 29 (1978–1979) 5–124. On the Ghent plays specifically, see Drewes J.B., “Interpretatie van de Gentse spelen van 1539. Grenzen of onmacht van de filologie?”, *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 100 (1984) 241–273. For an overview of further research on the Ghent plays, see Ramakers B., “In utramque partem vel in plures. Meinungs- und Deutungsdivergenzen im Genter Bühnenwettkampf von 1539”, in Stollberg-Rilinger B. – Weller Th. (eds.), *Wertekonflikte – Deutungskonflikte. Internationales Kolloquium des Sonderforschungsbereichs 496 an der Westphälische Wilhelmsuniversität Münster, 19.–20. Mai 2005, Symbolische Kommunikation und gesellschaftliche Wertesysteme, Schriftenreihe des Sonderforschungsbereichs 496* 16 (Münster: 2007) 197–226.

the other denomination, or seen, in other words, as contributions to contemporary religious controversy written from confessional conviction, even though, as shown by the ban on dissemination of the texts, this was the effect the authorities most feared. Rather, the theatrical discourse, the entirety of verbal and visual communication, was based on giving the performers and their audience food for thought regarding a matter, *in casu* the preparation for dying, which *in hora mortis* required less of a rational, intellectual position, and more of an emotional, devotional attitude or *habitus*. In this way, the plays here discussed (and the other Ghent plays) are more alike than different.⁷

Thus, the similarities should not be looked for in the answers to the formulated question that arise over the course of the plays, or in the reasoning that was presented to support those answers – in that respect the chambers did indeed differ greatly from each other at times – but in the *experience* of the final hours by the protagonist in all of the plays, the Mankind character, the representative of the human race, who at some point in the play is confronted with this question. What in the hour of his death is said to be his greatest comfort in a theological sense, turns out to be no more – maybe even less – important than his spiritual *habitus*, demonstrated by his appearance and demeanour on stage, visually of course, but also verbally, in the way he expresses his inner state, not only by the choice of his words, but also by their pitch and volume. Thus, the Mankind character presents to the audience less an intellectual (theological) than a behavioural (devotional) model of dying peacefully in the expectation of Heaven. During the play such models are in turn presented to him in the form of living images or tableaux vivants, the subjects of which are taken from the Bible. They perform an argumentative function in that they complete the theological argumentation. But their effect on the Mankind figure is not just intellectual in nature, leading to understanding, but also emotional, leading to affection, stemming from the recognition of and empathy with the condition and position (not just figuratively but also literally) of the person or persons that are represented to him in the tableaux vivants. In some cases, the images even invite a kind of spiritual union.

⁷ Ramakers, “In utramque partem” 204–207, 224–226.

Approach

To establish all this, a performative approach is required, an approach in which an imaginative staging of the play is the main object. The reason for choosing this approach is the fact that historical drama was received, first and foremost, as a performance, not as a text meant for reading. This is even more true for the drama of the rhetoricians. When one aims to reconstruct how their plays were staged, and which effects were intended, one cannot ignore their performativity. Unlike contextual or semiotic approaches which focus on the plays' topical, referential value and on the time, place and circumstances of their performance, here dramatic discourse itself is put to the fore (the interpretation of which, however, may very well be supported by topical or contextual evidence).

The aim is to ‘‘exaggerate’’ the medium of drama, its affective corporeality as the carrier of meanings.⁸ This approach centres around what one could call ‘eloquent presence’, the presence primarily of the characters, who can be called eloquent, because both their appearance and their speeches and performance were designed to create rhetorical effects, using existing rhetorical principles that were handed down from the Middle Ages, or new ones, those of classical rhetoric, rediscovered from antiquity by the humanists.⁹ Eloquence and rhetoric are concepts which are closely related to persuasion. It is essential to realise that persuasion encompasses both word and image. These plays use verbal argument as a means of aural persuasion, but also gesture and action in general as means of visual persuasion. Persuasion and argument did not come down to *docere* alone, but also included *moveare* (which appealed to the audience on an emotive level), and *delectare* (the purely aesthetic pleasure created by the performance).¹⁰ These ends could work together to achieve a greater effect. Put simply,

⁸ States B.O., *Great Reckonings in Little Rooms. On the Phenomenology of Theater* (Berkeley et al.: 1985) 27.

⁹ For an overview of the influence of rhetoric on the literature of the period, see Vickers B., *In Defence of Rhetoric* (Oxford: 1998). With respect to visual rhetoric, see Eck C. van, *Classical Rhetoric and the Visual Arts in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: 2008).

¹⁰ Hoffmann M., *Rhetoric and Theology. The Hermeneutic of Erasmus* (Toronto: 1994) 78–81, *passim*.

not only the *logos* of the characters, but also their *ethos* and *pathos* determined the plays' effects.¹¹

It is not at all inconsistent that in rhetoricians' plays, even in those parts that focus on aural persuasion, the didactic dialogues also allow much room for visual persuasion in the shape of *tableaux vivants*.¹² Quintilian and Cicero considered *enargeia* or *evidentia* to be effective tools to make listeners understand something, using a lively image.¹³ When these images are not only described through *ekphrasis*, but also brought to life using *prosopopoeia*, as is done in many competition plays, their effect can be quite substantial.¹⁴ The use of personified allegory, the use of drama at all, signals the rhetorical need to convince the audience through aural and visual means. Thus, the privileged place of theatre within the culture of persuasion in the sixteenth-century Low Countries (and in Europe at large) is not just due to the greater appeal of sensory, affective and kinetic forms of literature – most people could see and hear, not all could read – but also to the greater effectiveness of these mimetic (representing) as opposed to diegetic (narrating) genres.¹⁵ This fits with the late medieval and early modern 'ability and even eagerness to learn from pictures and other visual representations' in general.¹⁶

It appears that there were intuitive notions about the effect and processing of information received through *aisthesis* (perception through

¹¹ Ramakers, "In utramque partem" 203–204; Ramakers B., "Tonen en betogen. De dramaturgie van de Rotterdamse spelen van 1561", in Duits H. – Strien T. van (eds.), 'De rhetorijcke in vele manieren'. *Lezingen bij het afscheid van Marijke Spies als Hoogleraar Oudere Nederlandse Letterkunde aan de Vrije Universiteit te Amsterdam*, special issue *Spiegel der Letteren* 43,3 (2001) 176–204, esp. 178–186.

¹² On the use of *tableaux vivants* in rhetoricians' plays generally, see Hummelen W.M.H., "Het tableau vivant, de 'toog', in de toneelspelen van de rederijkers", *Tijdschrift voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* 109 (1992) 192–222. On the use of *tableaux vivants* in the Ghent plays, see Ramakers, "In utramque partem" 213–216.

¹³ Eck, *Classical Rhetoric* 7–9, 60. For an application of the concept on rhetoricians' plays, see Bussels B., "Hoe overtuigt Coornherts *Comedie vande Rijckeman?* *Enargeia en het opvoeren van personificaties*", *Spiegel der Letteren* 50 (2007) 1–40.

¹⁴ Webb R., *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Farnham et al.: 2009); Paxson J.J., *The Poetics of Personification* (Cambridge: 1994).

¹⁵ Mancing H., "See the play, read the book", in McConachie B. – Hart F.E. (eds.), *Performance and Cognition. Theatre studies and the cognitive turn* (London – New York: 2006) 189–206, esp. 193–195.

¹⁶ Spolsky E., *Word vs. Image. Cognitive Hunger in Shakespeare's England* (Hounds-mills, Basingstoke: 2007) 8. See also Spolsky E., "Iconotropism, or Representational Hunger: Raphael and Titian", in Spolsky E. (ed.), *Iconotropism. Turning toward Pictures* (Cranbury, NJ: 2004) 23–36.

the senses) at the basis of the choice for theatre as a means of mass communication, for which modern psychology has since found neurological evidence. This is treated theoretically and methodologically by theatre scholars in performance orientated approaches.¹⁷ Broadly speaking, such approaches deem imagining and understanding to be one and the same thing.¹⁸ Theatre is ‘less a system of *communicating* experience than actually *being* experience’.¹⁹ We perceive in order to understand. Two related insights emerge from these observations, namely that cognition is embodied, which is to say that humans think in terms of images of the body (and its surroundings) and that thinking is metaphoric in nature.²⁰ This would especially explain the popularity of allegorical drama, which, after all, represents general concepts and their relationships through the use of personifications that visibly embody these concepts and relationships in human form.²¹ As much as they speak and reason, and make a cerebral impression, so too, they put varying emotions into words and actions. The perception and experience of personifications by an audience is entirely part of the integrated reception of this type of drama. They are intended to incite empathy in the audience.²² There also appear to have been intuitive notions regarding the effect of acted emotions that can currently be substantiated by results from neuroscientific research.²³

¹⁷ Worthen W.B., “Drama, Performativity, and Performance”, *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 113 (1998) 1093–1107; Jahn M., “Narrative Voice and Agency in Drama: Aspects of a Narratology of Drama”, *New Literary History* 32 (2001) 659–679, esp. 660–661. On the performative approach in cultural studies generally, see Gertman E., *Visualizing Medieval Performance. Perspectives, Histories, Contexts* (Aldershot – Burlington, VT: 2008).

¹⁸ Cook A., “Interplay: The Method and Potential of a Cognitive Scientific Approach to Theatre”, *Theatre Journal* 59 (2007) 579–594, esp. 589.

¹⁹ Cook, “Interplay” 589.

²⁰ Cook, “Interplay” 581.

²¹ On cognition and embodiment, see Hart F.E., “Performance, phenomenology, and the cognitive turn”, in McConachie B. – Hart F.E. (eds.), *Performance and Cognition. Theatre studies and the cognitive turn* (London – New York: 2006) 29–51. For a recent application of this approach to medieval theatre, see: Stevenson J., *Performance, Cognitive Theory, and Devotional Culture. Sensual Piety in Late Medieval York, Cognitive Studies in Literature and Performance* 4 (New York: 2010).

²² Shuger D.K., *Sacred Rhetoric. The Christian Grand Style in the English Renaissance* (Princeton, NJ: 1988) 59–76; Heinen U., “Emotionales Bild-Erleben in der Frühen Neuzeit”, in Zymner R. – Engel M. (eds.), *Anthropologie der Literatur. Poetogene Strukturen und ästhetisch-soziale Handlungsfelder* (Paderborn: 2004) 356–382, esp. 367–373.

²³ On emotions in rhetoricians’ plays, see Coignau D., “Emotions and Rhetoric in Rederijker Drama”, in Lecuppre-Desjardin E. – Bruaene A.-L. Van (eds.), *Emotions in the Heart of the City (14th–16th Century), Studies in European Urban History*

While the proposed approach can, historically speaking, be related to insights from classical rhetoric, it does have a modern, philosophical or epistemological foundation in phenomenology.²⁴ Whereas in a semiotic approach the performance is considered an encoded message to be read by the spectator searching for ‘meaning effects’, the approach favoured here is of a more phenomenological kind, looking for ‘presence effects’.²⁵ This implies a way of interpreting in which our attention, like that of the contemporary spectator, does not switch from the actors (and from everything else that is said, shown and done by them) to the characters they embody and to the meanings they represent, at least not immediately. What belongs to the materiality of the signifier – the bodily substantiality of the characters and everything belonging to it, including the spaces they occupy on stage – is the primary focus. Thus, the approach advocated here amounts to a performance-orientated textual analysis, made possible by the fact that play scripts refer not only to what was said on stage, but also to what could be seen there.²⁶

Phenomenology insists that identity and intelligibility are available in things, and that we ourselves are defined as the ones to whom such identities and intelligibilities are given. In short: we should look *at* what we, in a semiotic approach, would only look *through*. The play in performance constitutes a sensory experience that cannot be accounted for in a semiotic system: ‘What the text loses in signifying power’ during the performance – after all, the audience could not reread the spoken dialogue, even if they could catch all the words – ‘it gains in corporeal presence’.²⁷ Hence the need for rounding out a semiotics of these plays with a phenomenology of their sounds and images.

(1100–1800) 5 (Turnhout: 2005) 243–256. On acting and emotions, see Konijn E., *Acting Emotions. Shaping Emotions on Stage* (Amsterdam: 2000). On mind and emotions, see Rizzolatti G. – Sinigaglia C., *Mirrors in the Brain. How Our Minds Share Actions and Emotions* (Oxford: 2008).

²⁴ Hart, “Performance”; States, *Great Reckonings*; Garner S.B., Jr., *Bodied Spaces: Phenomenology and Performance in Contemporary Drama* (Ithaca – London: 1994).

²⁵ Gumbrecht H.A., *Production of Presence. What Meaning Cannot Convey* (Stanford, CA: 2004) 18, 49.

²⁶ Pfister M., “Reading the body: the corporeality of Shakespeare’s text”, in Scolnicov H. – Holland P. (eds.), *Reading plays. Interpretation and reception* (New York et al.: 1991) 110–122.

²⁷ States, *Great Reckonings* 29.

Preliminary Observations

It is assumed here that the dramaturgy the audience is presented with is not at all arbitrary in any of the Ghent plays. The choice of personified concepts is always motivated by the rational, psychological and, more specifically, theological or religious discourses which are visualised using these concepts. Their presence and behaviour can be explained from trains of thought and mental processes these personifications are meant to visualise, simply because they are factors in those processes. This is the reason why it is unhelpful, if not wrong, to define these and other allegorical rhetoricians' plays as no more than visualised debates, as if we are dealing with no more than arguments in which the different points of view are presented by different characters for reasons of clarity, and further, having noted this, can restrict ourselves to the interpretation of the structure of the debates and to the nature of the arguments exchanged, leaving out of consideration the characters, their links to the signified concepts and their presence on stage in all its theatrical facets.²⁸ Even in the most argumentative plays, verbal discourse conjoins with a dramaturgy which is prominently visual, making the plays as a whole become a reflection of the (inner) process of deliberation and (emotional) experience of the protagonist.²⁹

In both the Kaprijke and the Antwerp plays the protagonist indicates that everything he experiences and perceives outwardly is mainly processed within, in his heart or soul, the place where his cognitive faculties are located. Here man listens and hears with his inner eye and ear. Whereas the Antwerp play mentions the heart explicitly and repeatedly, the Kaprijke play does not. This is all the more remarkable, considering the fact that the former seems to be functioning on a predominantly logical, argumentative level, whereas the latter, partly due to its traditional dramaturgy, seems to be functioning on a mainly psychological, emotional one. Furthermore, the Mankind character in the Antwerp play starts reasoning with the personified concepts confronting him right from the beginning, whereas his counterpart in the Kaprijke play (after a brief moment of hesitation) engages in

²⁸ Spies M., “Op de questye...”: Over de structuur van 16^e-eeuwse zinnespelen”, *De nieuwe taalgids* 83 (1990) 139–150.

²⁹ Ramakers, “Dutch Allegorical Theatre” 130–131, 146.

sensual pleasures first, before getting involved in a comparable verbal exchange.

The personifications most common in rhetoricians' plays are those of the condition and functioning of the mind, reason, and sense, of speech, sensory perception (predominantly sight and hearing), experience, comprehension, and memory. In the sixteenth century, when drama became a tool for moral and religious instruction, personifications of education and textual exegesis rose to prominence as well, the latter primarily in connection to the Bible. In the Antwerp play one of the three personifications confronting the Mankind character embodies an inner faculty: reason. The other two represent outward, written institutions and the communication thereof: the law of the Old Testament and the preaching of the Word. As many as five personifications address the Mankind character in the *Kaprijke* play. Four of them embody mental forces: faith, conscience, reason and hope. Only one represents knowledge coming from outside: instruction. All five show considerable emotionality, just like the protagonist. Given the nature of the three personifications in the Antwerp play, it is not surprising that they engage in a more businesslike debate with the Mankind figure. As noted, a personification of reason appears in both plays. Given the fact that the Antwerp play is considered to be Protestant, Lutheran to be precise, its appearance is remarkable. For reasons to be explained, Luther was wary about human reason. He considered man's rational faculty to be opposed to faith. The Antwerp playwright, however, thought more positively about it, and shaped his personification accordingly. Reason plays an even more prominent role in his play than in that of his colleague from *Kaprijke*. In the latter, the personification of faith stands out considerably, a remarkable feat given the play's supposedly Catholic character. One would expect its appearance in a heterodox rather than an orthodox play. After all, Luther championed the principle of salvation through faith alone.

The emotional state of the Mankind character in both plays is a result of the basic pattern of allegorical rhetoricians' plays, that is, of his quest for insight and understanding, literally in the shape of a journey (as in the *Kaprijke* play), figuratively in the shape of a didactic dialogue (as in the Antwerp play), or in the shape of a combination of both.³⁰ In both plays the Mankind character treats the contest's

³⁰ Ramakers, "Dutch Allegorical Theatre" 134–138.

question – ‘What is the greatest comfort for man dying?’ – as personal and acute. In other words: he is himself the person about to die, who worries about his place in Heaven. As soon as he realises this – right from the start in the Antwerp play, three fifths into the Kaprijke play – he gets emotional. At first he is desperate, having been told by his interlocutors that what he thought could justify him will not actually do so (Antwerp), or being convinced that having sinned gravely justification is no longer possible (Kaprijke). In both plays the Mankind figure starts a debate with his discussants, exchanging (mainly) Biblical arguments to support his points of view.

In the play from Kaprijke, the Mankind character, fearing condemnation, remains desperate until convinced by his advisers that justification is at hand. In the play from Antwerp his counterpart first stubbornly holds on to his views, but, under the weight of the arguments put forward by his advisers, finally gives in. In the remaining part of the colloquy, he becomes increasingly emotional, due to everything he hears and takes to heart, especially from the moment that verbal argumentation is supported by visual, comprised of three tableaux vivants. On the one hand these function as *loci communes* in a critical debate following the rules of the *genus didascalion* as designed by Philipp Melanchthon – which would correspond with the common Protestant (Lutheran) interpretation of the play.³¹ On the other hand, the elucidation provided by these living images triggers an affective response, which cannot be attributed to their content only, but also to the fact that they were shown and visually perceived. Rhetoricians must have aimed for this effect on the audience too – the Mankind figure’s reaction leaves no doubt about that. As part of a humanistic way of reasoning, they are not only rationally, but also emotionally convincing. At the same time they stand in a medieval tradition of experiencing images, one with mystical roots. It is, remarkably enough, the Antwerp play that describes this experience in terms of spiritual unity. This is partly due to the plays’ content. In the Antwerp play, the final tableau depicts the answer to the question, while in the Kaprijke, the tableaux vivants (there are two in this play) are presented as illustrations or examples of the answer that was given shortly before. Their

³¹ Knape J., *Philipp Melanchthons ‘Rhetorik’* (Tübingen: 1993) 6; Pauck, W. (ed.), *Melanchthon and Bucer* (Philadelphia – London: 1969) 9. On Melanchthon’s homiletic theory, see Shuger, *Sacred Rhetoric* 64–68.

effect is described in terms of identification, not unification. Nevertheless, they offer the Mankind character the opportunity to die with a comforting image in mind. The same applies to the living images shown in the Antwerp play.

It is clear that the characters speak, and thus also listen, a lot. Still, understanding in both plays is also emphatically taken as a kind of seeing. This does not just show in the use of tableaux vivants in both plays. The one from Kaprijke also plays with the difference between physical (material) and metaphysical (spiritual) light. Two types of visual perception correspond respectively: outer (physical) and inner (spiritual) sight.³² Finally, an observation concerning speech, or rather: non-speech. Even though there is speech, both plays contain a number of characters that maintain meaningful silences. These silences indicate changes in the inner process of deliberation that the plays illustrate.

The Kaprijke Play

In the play from Kaprijke, the protagonist is called Man ('Mensche') or Mankind. As noted, the question that needed to be answered in every play was: 'What is the greatest comfort for man dying?'. It seems obvious to assume that he is the one who at a certain moment is confronted with his impending death and makes the question the subject of the play's action. It is remarkable, however, that nothing indicates that Mankind is about to die until about three fifths into the play. Neither he nor any other character on stage broaches the subject. The opening raises the expectation of a traditional *zinnespel*, in that the protagonist is lured into a sinful life, comes to repent and gains grace, or at least may hope for it, but does not die. It seems that the anonymous playwright wanted to keep to a familiar pattern of dramaturgy. In any case, his dramaturgy characterises itself through a few traditional elements: the pilgrimage, the allegorical clothing and props, the scene at the inn. In all their sensuousness, they reflect, and thus help the audience to see and understand, what is going on inside Mankind. By often using

³² Moser N., *De strijd voor rhetorica. Poëtica en positie van rederijkers in Vlaanderen, Brabant, Zeeland en Holland tussen 1450 en 1620* (Amsterdam: 2001) 152–165; Falkenburg R.L., "Doorzien als esthetische ervaring bij Pieter Brueghel I en het vroeg-zestiende-eeuwse landschap", in Devisscher H. (ed.), *De uitvinding van het landschap. Van Patinir tot Rubens* (Antwerpen: 2004) 53–65, esp. 63–65.

neologisms formed from French or Latin words, he may be identified on a linguistic level as a traditional rhetorician. He is also certainly traditional in an orthodox sense, as far as theology is concerned. Furthermore he shows a respectable command of the Bible and a good understanding of the physical and mental factors that, according to late medieval thinking, played a role in religious experience.

Seduction and Sin

However, we begin with the dramaturgic aspects. Firstly, there is the presence of two *sinnekens*, the traditional pair of devilish tempters, called Distracted Youth ('Verdwaesde Iongheyt') and Vehement Lust ('Vieryge Lust'). They enter the stage first, during which they greet each other, as is standard, with a rondeau, of which they speak the lines in alternation. In relatively short speeches (one or two lines) they introduce and describe themselves and each other in relation to the negative effect they have on their victims. They call each other 'niece' ('nicht(e)'; vss. 1, 7, 133) and 'cousin' ('couzijn'; vss. 2, 8, 14), as is customary. They aim to exercise a bad influence on young people, who are more inclined to sin than older people.³³

A victim presents himself in the person of Mankind ('Mensche'). He enters the stage preceded by Faith ('Ghelooove'), who carries a lamp. Distracted Youth calls Mankind an 'idiot' ('sulfus'; vs. 72). Vehement Lust announces her intention of blowing out the 'light' ('lichte'; vss. 74, 76) burning in the lamp of Faith. The true meaning of that light and of seeing it (or not seeing it, and thus of blindness) is presented straight away, when the two duos first make contact. Faith asks Mankind: 'Can you see well?' ('Zuldy wel zien?'; vs. 82), to which the *sinnekens* yell out that this is a redundant question: it is, after all, day. If Mankind cannot see, he must be 'blind' ('blent'; vs. 84). Later on in the play, the contrast between the two concepts of light that are being used – spiritual and physical – are again emphasised. When Faith warns of the extinguishing of his light,³⁴ Distracted Youth points out

³³ The Dutch word 'lust' in the name of the second *sinneken* can in this context be interpreted as '(deadly) sin'.

³⁴ The characters are here referred to as 'he' or 'she', depending on the grammatical gender of the Dutch noun in their names. In most cases the play text too refers to them as either male or female characters (to be sure, all parts were played by male actors).

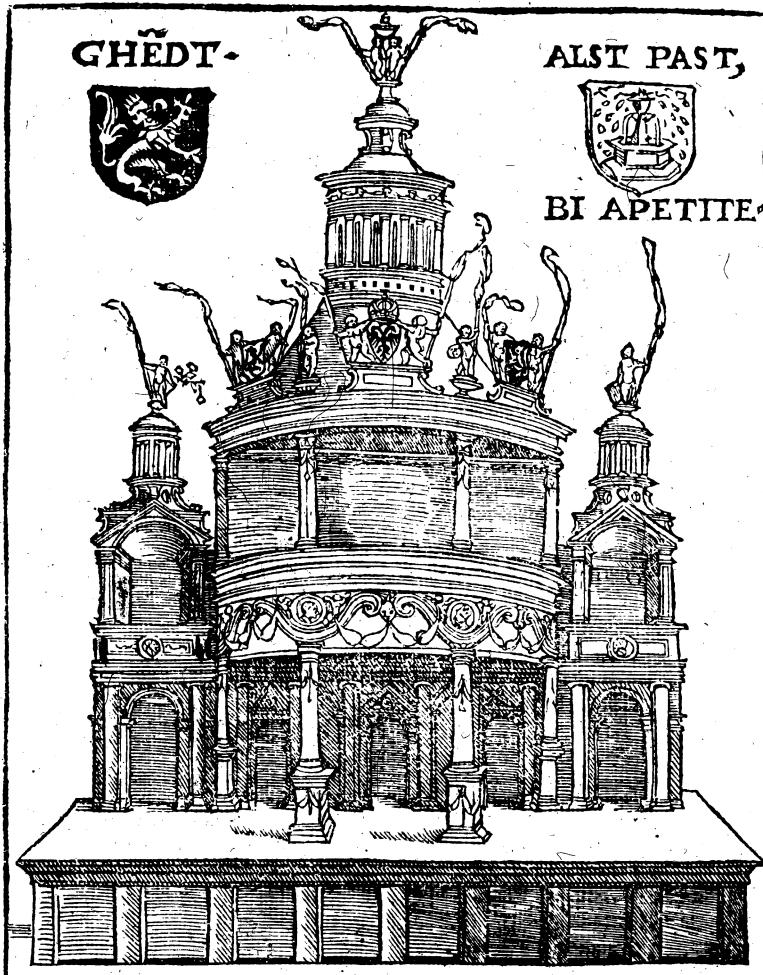
that the sun is still shining and that they will light Mankind's way after dusk, using 'toortsen' ('torches'; vs. 168).³⁵ That Faith's lamp offers spiritual enlightenment, he quickly points out: 'This lantern is the Word of God' ('Deze lantaerne es dwoort Gods'; vs. 87) that will not be missed by those who have faith. It is, as Faith says, citing *Psalm* 119:105, 'a lamp to my feet' ('een lantaerne an mijn voeten'; vs. 91).³⁶

At this early point Mankind is dressed as a pilgrim, bearing 'The mantle of innocence' ('Tcleed van innocencyen'; vs. 107) on his shoulders and carrying a rod called 'trust in God' ('betrauwen op God'; vs. 94), in which we may recognise an allusion to *Psalm* 24:4. *Psalms* seems to be the favourite Biblical book of this playwright. He has Mankind say 'according to David' ('naer Davids verclaren'; vs. 108) that he who is 'pure of heart' ('zuver van herten'; vs. 110) will receive the kingdom of God (*Psalm* 24:4–5). His attributes must keep him from walking astray ('wter dolijnghen hauwen'; vs. 106). The path of Mankind's life is made explicit by calling it a 'pilgrimage' ('pilgrymage'; vs. 115).

On stage, he sees 'two roads' ('twee wegheen'; vss. 116, 118), one leading 'to eternal death' (ter eewygher doot'; vs. 119), the other to 'Abraham's bosom' ('Abrahams schoot'; vs. 120), as Faith describes it, using a reference to *Luke* 16:22. Not only does he name these two roads, he points them out as well. They must have been visible somehow to the audience. For their performances, rhetoricians made use of a stage across which a façade was placed crossways. Entrances were made within this screen, which could be opened and closed through the use of curtains. The level access points were used for the exits and entrances of characters, while those on the first elevation were used for the display of tableaux vivants. The version of the construction for the Ghent competition is known from the edition of the plays (fig. 1). Faith admonishes Mankind to go neither left nor right, but rather 'straight ahead' ('effen duere'; vs. 122). At the same time he may have pointed at the entrances behind him. Faith and Mankind describe the one path as good, level and straight (the word 'wide' does not appear), but leading to damnation, while the other is hard to walk and, indeed, 'narrow' ('stranghen'; vs. 131), but actually leads to salvation.

³⁵ The contrast is also touched on in vss. 209–212.

³⁶ Moser, *De strijd voor rhetorica* 161.



Hier op ware de spelē vtoogt

Fig. 1. Anonymus, *Stage of the Ghent Rhetoricians' Contest, in Spelen van zinne binnen Ghendt vertoocht [...]* (Ghent, Joost Lambrecht: 1539), fol. A2v. Engraving, Royal Library, The Hague.

The *sinnekens* meanwhile do not remain on the sidelines and try, initially with comments of one or two lines, but with progressively more voluminous interruptions, to get Mankind to choose the wide path. The degree to which he is susceptible to their arguments – really more whispered suggestions – can be seen in the increasingly emotional appeals, starting with ‘O Mankind’ (‘Och Mensche’; vss. 150, 160), through which Faith attempts to keep him on the narrow path, again pointing out that God’s Word (the lamp) will illuminate his way and that through the strength of his faith (the character) he will not lose his trust in God (the rod). That the hardships of that path were actually visible is clear from the following line of Mankind: ‘For I see that you [the *sinnekens*] speak the truth before my eyes’ (‘Want ic zie dat ghy waer zeght voor mijn oghen’; vs. 159).

Faith has earlier called upon him to keep seeing reality in a spiritual light, but the *sinnekens* convince him to judge reality only with physical eyes from now on. He may only see the hardships that the central road promises, and which, it may be assumed, would actually have been visible through the middle opening, via the use of painting, props or a combination of both. At any rate, one of the access points next to it would have been associated with the ‘path’ (‘wegrug’; vss. 172, 175) that the *sinnekens* tempt Mankind into following. He therefore asks Faith to take a step back, literally, by walking farther behind him, causing, as the latter warns, the (spiritual) light slowly to fade. From this moment onward, Mankind moves, as it were, in spiritual darkness. The *sinnekens* lead him to an inn called ‘cesspit of despair’ (‘poel van desperacyen’; vss. 191, 249), where, as Faith remarks, man arrives when he literally ‘leaves’ or ‘puts behind’ (‘achter stelt’; vs. 192) his faith. Its landlady is called ‘Nourishment of Sin’ (‘Der Zonden Voetselle’), who has other pleasures to offer besides drink and food. His stay with her is characterised by gluttony and lechery.

In order to approach her with self confidence, the *sinnekens* help Mankind to undergo a metamorphosis. His mantle and rod are replaced by the ‘mantle of pride’ (‘dat cleedt van preeminencyen’; vs. 205) and the ‘knife of revenge’ (‘dit mes van wraken’; vs. 214). As a bonus on the side, he receives the ‘hat with a plume’ (‘die mutse met die plume’; vs. 216), which signifies his vanity and worldliness. ‘Make much of yourself, really apply yourself to this end’ (‘Maect u zelven groot, ziet dat ghy u daertoe gheift’; vs. 206), Vehement Lust urges, while she and Distracted Youth fit him into his new outfit, in which Mankind, still feeling a little uncomfortable, prepares for his meeting

with Nourishment of Sin, as the remarks of the bystanders and Mankind himself imply, again in a double sense, both spiritually and physically. When the latter says, 'I don't know myself' ('Ic en kenne my zelven niet'; vs. 221) this not only relates to Mankind's embarrassment about being dressed so garishly, to his shame regarding his surroundings (in the outer eye, so to say, of others), but also to doubts about whether his outer appearance reflects an inner defect, and so to feelings of guilt toward God (in other words: in his own inner eye). A little later, Vehement Lust introduces Mankind to Nourishment of Sin, and in doing so calls him 'beschaemt' (vs. 237), which can mean both 'abashed' and 'ashamed'. In this context, it should be noted that the earlier call by Distracted Youth also contained the term 'unabashed' or 'unashamed' ('onbeschaemt'; vs. 237).

The landlady calls him 'Into my house' ('In mijn huus'; vs. 248), the inn.³⁷ When they meet, she kisses Mankind on the cheek. He says he could dance with 'fiery lust' ('vieryghen luste'; vs. 251). Apparently, he has gotten over his shame. Her kiss went 'to the bottom of my heart' ('tot inden put van mijnder herten'; vs. 254). It ushers in the dinner scene, where both, constantly goaded on by the *sinnekens*, eat and drink and declare their love for each other. Faith has followed Mankind to the door of the inn. In answer to his question whether he should remain there, one of the *sinnekens* replies that he can sit there or 'somewhere outside in the green' ('buten yewers int groene'; vs. 274), until he is called back inside. He remains onstage but henceforth keeps his peace until just before the end of the play. We may safely assume that he is still carrying the lamp, which has been extinguished due to neglect.

During the recitation of a rondeau (vss. 282–293), sensuous pleasure is brought to a peak. Nourishment of Sin encourages Mankind in a line from the refrain to 'Show lust now' ('Tooght lust nu'; vss. 283, 286, 291). Afterwards another rondeau follows, of which all the lines are grouped in threes, and the separate phrases are alternately recited by Mankind, Nourishment of Sin and one of the *sinnekens* (vss. 312–335). The text suggests that, at the same time, cups were handed out and there was toasting, drinking, clapping, hugging and kissing. The following seems to be, verbally and visually, a highly stylised scene,

³⁷ Presumably he has situated himself near an exit left or right in the stage façade. Whether the scene that follows is played before or behind it is not clear.

which ends as the lovers break into the first stanza of an amorous song (vss. 344–351).

Silence

At the height of all this amusement, Mankind suddenly becomes quiet. His silence lasts for about sixty lines. In a literary rather than theatrical approach to the play, the mute presence of a character may easily escape notice or be deemed unfit for interpretation. Even more so, when, as with the present scene, the silence of a character is only sparsely commented on by the other characters. They still speak to and about Mankind, but his dumbness is taken for granted, as it were, and thus regarded as natural, by the audience as well, which apparently did not need any explanation, direct or indirect, to understand the situation. The fact that Mankind, prior to turning dumb, was enjoying heights of sensual pleasure, can only have reinforced the effect of his abrupt muteness.

Mankind's silence is caused by a sudden speech delivered by the character Conscience ('Consciencye'), Mankind's conscience that is, for she addresses herself directly to him. She informs Mankind of his immanent end – the first time that the theme of mortality is touched on – and points out the necessity of returning to God to gain grace. The *sinnekens*, who have been orchestrating the goings-on at the inn, make a few futile attempts at reducing Conscience's influence verbally, and perhaps even physically, but eventually they withdraw. Shortly after Conscience's entrance, Reason ('Reden') and Blessed Instruction ('Zalyghe Leerijnghe') appear on stage. They have been attracted by the 'lamentation' ('lamentacye'; vs. 372) delivered by Conscience, as Blessed Instruction suggests in his first speech. He calls her words an 'arguwacye' (vs. 373), an inner turmoil or internal conflict, thus indicating something has been made externally visible that in reality is taking place inwardly, inside Mankind.

Conscience now informs Reason and Blessed Instruction of the cause of her pain: Mankind has fallen, while previously he was innocent and comforted by his faith. Conscience describes the state of affairs at the start of the play, when Mankind appeared on stage together with Faith, carrying the lamp 'Word of God'. She apparently looks around: 'is he still here? / The lamp is out; who shall lessen his grief?' ('zitt hy noch? / Tlicht is wte; wie zal zynen commer stelpen?'; vss. 392–393).

The fact that Conscience has this knowledge suggests she was present on stage from the start, and has observed all that has happened, silently of course, because Mankind acts without conscience – ‘gewetenloos’ as one would say in Dutch – during the first part of the play. Her presence on stage is literally referred to with the very word ‘prezencye’ (vs. 365). Conscience’s first speech directed at Mankind was called sudden, due to the fact that her presence is not in any way indicated in the stage directions, as is the case with the entrances of the other characters. So, Conscience’s speech might be sudden to us readers, but not to the audience, who must have spotted her long before.

Later on, the sighing and grieving of Conscience is commented on by other characters as well. It is important to call attention to this, because Conscience’s upset or emotional state is not clearly marked, verbally and stylistically, let alone mentioned in the stage directions. Her grief only shows in such lines as the appeals ‘Oh Mankind’ (‘O Mensche’; vs. 352), ‘Oh Blessed Instruction and Lady Reason’ (‘O Zalyghe Leerijnghe en vrou Redene’; vs. 378), and the exclamations ‘Alas’ (‘Elaes’; vs. 354), ‘Ah grief’ (‘Och lacen’; vs. 360) and ‘ah, ah, ah’ (‘och, och, och’; vs. 391). We may therefore assume that she also expresses her feelings in physiognomy and body language, however modestly.

That Mankind is completely silent is also evident in the (initially) futile attempts of Blessed Instruction and Reason to get him to talk and to account for what Conscience has told them about his behaviour. Up until this point, they have not paid him any attention. It was, after all, Conscience who demanded all the attention. It looks as if Mankind, too, shows bodily and facial signs of desperation, following from questions asked of him by the *sinnekens*: ‘Why do you sigh?’ (‘Waer om verzuchty?'; vs. 396), ‘Why do you grieve?’ (‘Waer om wildy trueren?'; vs. 397). They, of course, see no reason for this behaviour. Blessed Instruction, on the contrary, asks Mankind why he is not applying reason – is this ‘on Faith’s advice?’ (‘naer Tgheloofs advijs?'; vs. 401) – and wonders literally where his ‘speech’ (‘sprake’; vs. 406) has gone. Reason admonishes him to listen to Blessed Instruction, to turn his face to God – and away from the *sinnekens* – and, indeed, to ‘sigh’ (‘verzucht’; vs. 403) for his sins. The *sinnekens* then attempt to keep Mankind from speaking by acting as his mouthpieces. One of them says that they hold his ‘procuration’ (‘procuracye’; vs. 407), as if they are his legal advisors.

Mankind’s silence obviously is the result of him becoming aware of his sinfulness. It would be too much to discuss the entire history of the

concept of conscience in the West from antiquity up to and including the sixteenth century. It seems more sensible to focus on the meaning of the word as it is used in the New Testament, in the *Epistles* and in *Acts* (it is not used in the Gospels). Paul defines conscience as the inner witness of objectionable and praiseworthy behaviour. He presents it as an existential agent, a psychological entity, of self-justification or self-condemnation, closely affiliated with the heart. In Romans 2:15, conscience is described with regard to the Gentiles as follows: ‘They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus’. In the Christian tradition, conscience is not only a witness, but also a prosecutor and a judge at the same time. Is that perhaps why the *sinnekens* for a moment pose as his attorneys? Mankind stands speechless before his conscience, his inner voice, without defence, and also defenceless before God, as Paul points out.³⁸

How Conscience may have looked we do not know. In the *Iconologia*, Ripa describes her as standing barefoot between a meadow filled with flowers, and a meadow filled with thorns, representing good and evil respectively. This image seems to fit with the motif of the wide and the narrow path, which perhaps was visually represented as Ripa describes. According to the *Iconologia*, Conscience holds a heart and watches it. That is where, according to Ripa, man keeps his secrets. Conscience makes them public through a living force. Thus, the playwright’s choice to personify Mankind’s conscience is explained, and his silence is as well. The scene shows Mankind’s inner landscape, his present moral conflict, which will soon reveal itself to the outside world as despair.

Despair and Hope

How very bad Mankind’s conscience is, is made plain by the expressions of despair displayed by Conscience, verbally and physically, to

³⁸ One might also think of the words of the prophet Zephaniah (1:7): ‘Be silent for the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is at hand’, or the words of the prophet Zechariah (2:13): ‘Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord; for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling’.

which Reason and Blessed Instruction come to the rescue. Why these two? Blessed Instruction denotes instruction that achieves a result of divine grace. It is meant to guide Mankind onto the right path again. Blessed Instruction's contribution remains small, however. Paying attention to the concept she personifies – as a teaching agent she passes on knowledge – it seems probable that she refers to faculties or virtues that can free Mankind from his state of despair, faculties he will have to regain or start using again. In this particular case the faculty of Reason and the virtue of Hope are intended.

Reason enters together with Blessed Instruction. She urges Mankind to turn to God, who, although Mankind has lived ‘without reason’ (‘buten redene’; vs. 410), will show Himself to be merciful. Thereupon Mankind breaks his silence and, for the duration of one speech, reacts to Reason’s pleading. He addresses her, ‘Ah, Reason’ (‘Och Redene’; vs. 413). Could it be a coincidence that it is Reason who rouses Mankind to speak again? Thomas Aquinas defines speech as belonging to the intellect. The same Thomas considered natural law, the inborn principles of right and wrong, to be the perfection of human reason. Whatever the case may be, it is Reason who brings Mankind back to his senses. Without doubt, he plays a positive role.³⁹ Now it is Conscience who is silent (having only two more lines uttered shortly before the play’s end). Mankind’s outer voice is now audible once again, after his inner voice – Conscience – had, as it were, temporarily silenced it. He seems to have regained his spiritual vision: ‘I now see death before my eyes; / God does no longer tolerate it’ (‘Ic zie nu de doot voor mynen oogen; / God en willes niet langher ghedooghen’; vs. 414). The play has finally reached the point where the competition’s question is brought up and addressed both implicitly and explicitly. Mankind is desperate, because he feels it is ‘too late’ (‘te spade’; vs. 413) for salvation: ‘Alas, O saddnes’ (‘Lacen, wachaermen’; vs. 423); he must remain ‘beyond grace’ (‘butter gracyen’; vs. 424). The name of the aforementioned inn, ‘cesspitt of despair’, now literally describes Mankind’s condition. Conscience refers to it (vs. 391), but also Mankind himself (vs. 425), and the character who is attracted by the lamentations of Blessed Instruction and Reason: Hope (‘Hope’). She says

³⁹ Buys R., *De kunst van het weldenken. Lekenfilosofie en volkstalig rationalisme in de Nederlanden (1550–1600)* (Amsterdam: 2009) 142–144.

of Mankind that ‘He lies in choked despair’ (‘Hy leyt in desperacyen versmaght’; vs. 431).

Hope has been drawn to the ‘clamour full of tribulation’ (‘gheschals vol tribulacyen’; vs. 426), which may be read as a reference to the Final Judgment (*Matthew* 24:21). Once Mankind is in despair, it is up to her, the second of the three theological virtues, to help him regain faith in the possibility of redemption and to show him that the narrow path can still be chosen. Now Blessed Instruction and Reason are the ones who (for now) remain silent. For the duration of more than 100 verses – a considerable length for this 569 line play – Hope and Mankind carry on an intense didactic dialogue, in which Mankind remains convinced for quite a while that redemption is impossible. This is shown through exclamations such as ‘Oh’ (‘O’; vs. 432) and ‘Ah’ (‘Och’; vss. 438, 444, 452), which are also used by Hope as she tries to rid Mankind of his despair. Will God’s ‘blessed suffering’ (‘zaligh lijden’; vs. 432), His ‘precious blood’ (‘precyeus bloet’; vs. 433) and ‘bitter pain’ (‘bitter pyne’; vs. 433) save him? Or will God rather condemn him in His ‘anger’ (‘gramschap’; vs. 435)? While Mankind doubts that God is ‘merciful’ (‘ontferm(h)echtigh’; vss. 434, 450), Hope is actually convinced. Again Mankind emphasises his state of ‘despair’ (‘desperacyen’; vss. 436, 447), by referring to his physical location on stage, which he describes as ‘this deep den’ (‘dit diepe hol’; vs. 446). The association with hell is evident. Just as clear is the contrast with and the distance to the place, of which Hope keeps holding out the prospect: Heaven, or ‘the house of your father’ (‘thuus van uwen vadere’; vs. 442), that is God, and the ‘bedroom of your mother’ (‘slaepcamere van uwer moedere’; vs. 443), that is Mary.

The degree to which he has regained his senses is made clear by several Biblical references he makes, illustrating Divine retribution rather than forgiveness (*Exodus* 20:5; *Psalms* 119:137, 75:2; *Romans* 12:19; *Genesis* 4:13; *Leviticus* 26:18, 28 – vss. 452–484). From the New Testament he cites *Hebrews* 10:28: ‘A man who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses’ (vss. 465–469). The ‘law of justice’ (‘wet van iusticyen’; vs. 475) also plays a role in the paraphrase of *2 Peter* 2:21, where the latter writes that ‘it would have been better for them [the unrighteous] never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them’. With an appeal to *Matthew* 12:36, he finally declares that ‘For every careless word [...] / Uttered, we will render account’ (‘Van allen verloren

woorden [...] / Ghesproken, sullen wy rekenijnghe gheven'; vs. 478). Fortunately, Hope, in one single speech, can suggest enough counter-examples to win Mankind over. He reminds Mankind of God's 'mercy' ('ontfermhertigheyt'; vss. 487, 491; *Psalms* 145:9; 57:1; *James* 2:13; *2 Corinthians* 1:3), and that He, following *Ezekiel* 33:11, does not want 'The death of the wicked' ('De doot vanden zondare'; vs. 496), but 'that he turn from his way and live' ('dat hy hem bekeere en magh leven'; vs. 497). 'God's grace through Hope' ('De ontfermigheyt godts midts Hope'; p. 435) was the chamber of Kaprijke's answer to the question. Immediately, Mankind admits to having been literally misled, and turns from a desperate into a hopeful person.

Tableaux Vivants

Hope now confirms the answer by revealing two tableaux vivants and explaining them to Mankind. They provide him with two Biblical models of repentant sinners approaching their superiors (a king and a father respectively), hoping to be forgiven. They serve as examples of what Mankind himself is going to do after dying: ask God for mercy. The first tableau depicts the reconciliation between the Syrian king Benhadad and the king of Israel, Ahab. The explanation Hope offers of this image refers to the content of *1 Kings* 20:32, which reads as follows: 'So they [that is the servants of Benhadad] girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads, and went to the king of Israel and said, "Your servant Benhadad says, 'Pray, let me live.'" And he said, "Does he still live? He is my brother"'. The tableau probably showed the servants of Benhadad standing before Ahab. Perhaps the tableau consisted of a conflation of the cited verse with that following, which describes how Benhadad appears before Ahab, and how they are reconciled, after Benhadad's servants notify him of Ahab's willingness to be reconciled. In this scene Benhadad is the sinner, and the sackcloth on the loins of his servants, and the ropes around their necks, can be interpreted as tokens of Benhadad's penitence. Whatever the case, Benhadad's servants, concludes Hope, were 'received / With willing heart in grace' ('ontfanghen / Met ghewillygher herten in gracyen'; vs. 517) by Ahab.

Why the playwright chose this particular theme is uncertain. It had no tradition as an Old Testament type. Mankind himself now admits that there is no more reason for 'despair' ('desperacyen'; vs. 418).

Referring to *Hebrews* 2:17, Hope emphasises that Christ made expiation for the sins of man through His personal ‘penitence’ (‘penitency’; vs. 526). He then introduces the second tableau. ‘Lift up your eyes’ (‘Slaet op u ooghen’), he says to Mankind, ‘so that you may know yourself’ (‘op dat ghy u zelven kent’; vs. 528). He has to leave ‘desperation’s dwelling’ (‘desperacyen wuene’; vs. 529) and turn to God. Now the ideal example of forgiveness for a repentant sinner is shown: the return of the prodigal son (*Luke* 15:20–24). Mankind identifies the scene himself: ‘That’s the Prodigal son!’ (‘Dats de verloren zuene’; vs. 531). This is all he needs to see. This is the ‘comfort’ (‘troost, confoort’; vs. 532) he was looking for. Now he calls forth Faith and asks to have the lamp re-lit. Faith steps forward again to speak. Mankind shows himself willing once again to follow Faith, not losing his ‘conscience’ (‘conscyencye’; vs. 535) as before. The character Conscience joins Mankind on his journey.

At some point, Hope probably gestured toward the central opening in the stage façade behind which Mankind was directed to find ‘charity’ (‘charitataten’; vs. 540), who was identified with God Himself, the end of the narrow path. Attired with his original attributes, Mankind accepts his last journey and approaches the said opening, convinced that God shall give him His ‘grace’ (‘gracye’; vs. 546). Hope, of course, is the second of the three theological virtues, and thus forms the link between Faith and Charity, who is to be met with in the afterlife. Quite probably, the author conceived of Charity as divine love, on account of the identification with God, and her close association with the place where love abides: Heaven. Blessed Instruction and Reason speak a short prologue. ‘Accept’, says the former, ‘this mystery to your profit’ (‘Anvaert dit misterye tuwelier bate’; vs. 549).

Even though Faith fulfils a vital role within the entire discourse – with his lamp (God’s Word) he precedes Mankind, lighting his final journey – this in no way constitutes an exclusive position. He functions in unity with Hope and Charity (who will be met in the hereafter), thus as a theological virtue, not as the *sola fide* of Lutheran theology. Eventually, it is the sister virtue of Hope who assumes the highest position, both in the play and in the final answer. Yet the Kaprijke play does not appear traditional in the sense that it suggests good works or the sacraments as the ‘greatest comfort for man dying’. It seeks to resolve the question by recourse to the notion of an inner, spiritual disposition.

The Antwerp Play

This play opens with a short enacted prologue – 23 lines in total – with two characters: Scriptural Inquiry ('Schriffts Onderzoucken') and Wrong Insight ('Verkeerde Zin'). The latter presents himself as a devilish figure, who seeks to hinder the reading of the Bible, but who feels threatened by the apparent success of his scene partner and quickly flees. Scriptural Inquiry asks a rhetorical question: 'Who does not like to hear the sweetness of the Ghost, / When the call to contemplation / And to education of the soul through Word of revelation / [is] Pure and immaculate?'.⁴⁰ What is striking about these lines is the spiritual, almost meditative context in which the proclamation of God's Word is placed. The Bible calls for and prompts contemplation and education of the soul. We will see that the playwright in question – suspected to be Jan van den Berghe⁴¹ – uses his solid soteriological argument, interspersed with Biblical quotations, especially from the New Testament, first and foremost to convince rationally, but finally also aims to touch the heart. We are dealing with a rhetorician who seems to be completely aware of the contemporary justification debate and, moreover, knows how to construct a topical line of argumentation around this theme. It is possibly the consequent treatment of the relationship between law and grace that won this play the first prize.

Final Hour

At the opening of the Antwerp play, Man Dying – his name says it all – is already dying. His first line sets the mood for the rest of his opening passage: 'Oh, dreadful thoughts burdened with anxiety, / Whither shall I turn' ('O vreezelick ghepeyns met zorghen belayen, / Waer zal ic my drayen'; vss. 24–25). Man Dying can no longer remain standing. On the right he therefore leans on Own Trust ('Eyghen Betrauwen'), on the left on Man's Succour ('sMenschen Bystandt'). Even though this play does not feature *sinnekens*, the first of these two characters does have a typical *sinnekens*' name and exhibits typical *sinnekens*'

⁴⁰ 'Wie hoort sgeests zoetheyt noye, / Daer dinspiracye tot contemplacye / En der zielen collacye duer dwoordt ontdeckt, / Reyn, onbevleckt?' (vss. 14–17).

⁴¹ Erné – Van Dis (eds.), *De Gentse Spelen* 275–276; Drewes, "Het interpreteren van godsdienstige spelen van zinne" 31.

behaviour by affirming the wrong convictions of Man Dying. His scene partner, Man's Succour, only speaks twice, but both times with crucial intent: to present the successive personifications of reason and Scripture as unmistakable sources of support for Man Dying. He, in turn, expresses feelings of fear and despair, felt in the 'heart' ('herte'; vss. 30, 33).

From where to expect help, he wonders? He gives the answer himself: Reason, 'for which I have my entire life, until this day / strived with honesty' ('Daer ic al mijn leven totten dagh van heden / Eerlick naer hebbe gheleift'; vs. 35–36). Man's Succour then announces the arrival of Reason ('Redene'). Man Dying asks him if God will reward him in the hereafter for his 'rational life' ('redelic leven'; vs. 44). Reason, however, immediately refers him to The Law ('De Wet'), who has accompanied him. Even if he, being the unwritten, natural moral law ('wet van uwer naturen'; vs. 46), could testify in the heart of Man Dying to this reasonableness, it is still better to turn to the written law of God, the Decalogue. He describes himself as a sieve ('zifte'; vs. 49), which helps to distinguish good from evil. Own Trust smells trouble, for he attempts to keep Man Dying away from The Law. 'Leave this fantasy' ('Laet deis fantazye'; vs. 52), he says, by which he means 'strange thoughts' or 'musings', indicating that what appears before the audience visualizes what is going inside Man Dying, within his heart. The heart is thus named again, now as a place for making moral judgments. And it will be mentioned many more times, indicating that what Man Dying is going through is an inner process, represented on stage.

Own Trust tries to reassure him: Man Dying has always lived reasonably and has afforded God 'many good works' ('veil schoon waercken'; vs. 55). Reason contradicts him: Own Trust does not understand. He urges The Law to name the commandments. Instead of the ten from the Old Testament, he gives two commandments on which, according to Christ, the law and the prophets depend: the love of God and that of one's neighbour (*Matthew 22:37–40*). They are the laws that should be followed with all one's heart, soul and mind (*Matthew 22:37*). Own Trust, sensing where the musings of Man Dying are heading, tries to nip the explanation of Reason and The Law in the bud. He concludes resolutely that Man Dying has been proven just, according to the New Testament commandment of love: 'he has done all that' ('hy hevet al ghedaen'; vs. 72). Reason, however, does not falter. As he makes clear through a paraphrase of *Matthew 22:27*, the commandment of love must be observed with a pure heart. This is what Man Dying lacks. His heart is 'unclean' ('onzuver'; vs. 76), like Adam's, because

of the temptation of the serpent in Paradise. In other words: Man Dying is weighed down by original sin. God himself has said, after all (*Genesis* 6:5), that man's 'intent and thoughts [...] are also evil in effect' ('opzet en ghedachten [...] zijn ooc al qwaet in crachten'; vss. 81–82), like those of Adam. The Vulgate speaks of *cogitatio cordis* ('thoughts of the heart').

Man Dying is desperate. He wonders aloud if he has not undertaken any virtuous works that justify him? Using a paraphrase of Paul (*Romans* 3:10–15) – who in turn cites *Psalms*, *Proverbs* and *Isaiah* – Law takes away any illusions. Law concludes (this time without paraphrasing a Scriptural passage): 'Thus, you stand totally impure in heart' ('Dus zydy int herte ghestelt gheheel onreyne'; vs. 101). Own Trust insists that Man Dying has maintained the law. On the contrary, says Reason: outwardly he may seem just, but God 'watches the heart from Heaven' ('anziende therte wt zynen throone'; vs. 110). Has Man Dying not performed those good works for love of self and personal gain only, for fear of punishment? If he had not expected a reward for them, that is, if the law had not been there, he would certainly have acted concupiscently, 'following his heart' ('naer zijn herte'; vs. 116). In short, Man Dying only shows himself attrite, not contrite.

Now Man Dying himself responds: if he can do nothing but sin, because this comes naturally, how can he be blamed for so behaving? Reason specifies his argument: stupid people sin and are punished for it, but Man Dying refrains from sin out of fear of shame. That is a form of self-love, not love of God and his fellow man. Own Trust explodes: 'Are you drunk?' ('Zydy droncken?'; vs. 129). How can God, he retorts, impose a law on man, to which he cannot adhere? That would be unjust. The Law answers with a paraphrase of *Romans* 3:20, that no one 'will be justified [...] by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin'. Thus, the anger of Own Trust is a confirmation of what is written in *Romans* 4:18, that 'the law brings wrath', namely, 'against the law' ('Op de wet'; vs. 134) itself and against Him who installed it, and, moreover, 'from inside' ('van binnen'; vs. 134). He ends with a paraphrase of *Romans* 7:10, that 'the very commandment [...] proved to be death to me'. Now Man Dying, too, pronounces the law to be unjust, which results in Reason and The Law reproaching him for begrudging God His justice and denying Him His omnipotence. They still identify his heart as the place where sin emerges (vss. 145, 149).

The indictments against Man Dying can scarcely be worse. His composure breaks. He can no longer move his feet and falls into a

chair called ‘anxiety’ (‘benautheyt’; vs. 155); he ‘must sit’ (‘moet zitten’; vs. 155). He complains that the most ‘important’ (‘dmeeste’; vs. 157) things have eluded him. Was his reason not able to show him his state of sin? Reason reacts with unrelenting admonition: I do this as much as God does it, by means of the law, ‘by the verdict [rendered] from the ground of your heart’ (‘Int oordeel naer sherten gront’; vs. 163), which is to say: through the voice of Man Dying’s conscience. Apparently he has not heard that voice. Reason continues: if God were to judge only man’s outer behaviour, his reputation, He would act no differently than a worldly judge. Then He would not know whether man was acting in accordance with the ‘commandment of love’ (‘tbekennen / Der liefden’; vss. 167–168): whether he does good out of true love of God and his fellow man, or whether he acts hypocritically, for outer gain, in effect hating both God and humankind. Because he has apparently neglected the ‘commandment of love’ (‘Tghebodt der liefden’; vs. 172), Man Dying, says The Law, will have to suffer like a sinner for his crimes in the hereafter.

From this moment onwards, Man Dying falls into great despair, and henceforth Own Trust will not interrupt him. Because all self confidence has been lost, its personification remains silent. Man Dying fears an eternal dying (‘een eeuwigh staerven’; vs. 181) now that God is about to examine closely the depths of his heart (‘tdiepste mijns herten’; vs. 180). This is the moment for him to be comforted with Biblical tidings. To this purpose, Preacher of the Word (‘Vercondigher des Woordts’) enters the stage. He will heal, as Man’s Succour says, his troubled heart (‘druckigh herte’; vs. 191): Man Dying must pray to God for grace (‘Bidt om gracye’; vs. 193). There now follows a didactic dialogue between Man Dying and Preacher of the Word on the chances of absolution. Preacher of the Word, after all, has come to offer comfort (‘Te troostene’; vs. 200).

Grace, Law and Reason

At the outset, the former presents himself as inconsolable, convinced as he is of God’s wrath, but he soon enough regains hope, namely, when Preacher of the Word shows him a tableau vivant of ‘the first promise made in heaven to the serpent’ (‘deerste belofte ghedaen inden paradyze ieghens tserpent’; vs. p. 286). This concerns God’s prophecy to the serpent (*Genesis* 3:15): ‘I will put enmity between you and the woman [Eve], and between your seed and her seed; he

shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel', words which are paraphrased by Preacher of the Word in his explanation of the image (vss. 223–228). Reason and The Law have robbed Man Dying of the illusion that 'his works' ('ws zelves waercken'; vs. 215) matter. He himself calls this illusion 'wrong insight' ('verkeerden zin'; vss. 215, 267), after the character from the prologue. However, they have not taken grace away from him. That is what the tableau makes clear: God's words to the serpent contain the promise of grace which, as Preacher of the Word avers, runs through the entire Bible, up to and including the New Testament.

The words 'grace' ('ghenade'; vss. 216, 262) and 'promise' ('beloofte(n)'; vss. 220, 235, 238, 243, 246, 320; and 'beloofde'; vs. 228) occur multiple times during this dialogue. The New Testament, or in other words Christ, is the fulfilment of this promise. In this context, Preacher of the Word points to Old Testament prophecies of His birth (*Luke* 1:32–33; *Isaiah* 7:14; 9:5; *Micah* 5:1). His name is mentioned repeatedly from this point onwards (vss. 260, 270, 274). The word 'comfort' appears in the form of the verb 'comforting' (vs. 268) and the noun 'comfort' (vs. 290), in the first case following the promise of Christ in *Matthew* 11:28 ('Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest'). Man Dying must find this comfort mostly in the contents of *Matthew* 19:17–20, and in the explanation of this passage by Preacher of the Word. Man Dying asks how it is possible that Christ, in *Matthew* 19:17, answered the rich young man's question, what good deed he must do to have eternal life, with the admonition to keep the commandments, when it is now stated that nobody is capable of doing that. Christ had even summed up the commandments (*Matthew* 19:18–19). The Law explains that Christ was rebuking the rich young man, who like Man Dying had actually claimed always to have followed the law (*Matthew* 19:20). The rest of the Biblical story is not discussed – the playwright apparently considered it common knowledge. The rich young man asked what else he should do. Christ answered that if he would be perfect, he should sell what he possessed and give it to the poor (*Matthew* 19:21). 'When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions' (*Matthew* 19:22). The conclusion then must be: the rich young man may have followed the law, but there was no renunciation or charity in him.

Has the law thus been made redundant? Does it only have the negative function of hammering home to man that he is not capable of good acts? Man Dying inquires politely – 'If I may ask' ('Maer oft ick

vraghen mochte'; vs. 278) – after the meaning of Christ's words in *Matthew* 5:22 and 28, where He first describes sinful acts – *in casu* hating one's neighbours and adulterous feelings – as subject to judgment and (hellish) punishment, and then links the avoidance of such with perfectibility. The relevant lines are from the Sermon on the Mount. The link between both is expressed in the words of The Law, who not only finishes the quotation of *Matthew* 5:22 started by Man Dying, and thus confirms it, but also supplements it with the call to use the law 'abundantly' ('overvloedigh'; vs. 284) *in addition to* grace (through Christ). Reason adds a paraphrase of *Matthew* 5:18: 'that not one iota will pass from the law' ('datter niet en magh achter blijven / Een tytelken des wets'; vss. 287–288).

What remains other than 'anxiety' ('benauwtheyt'; vs. 290), asks Man Dying, at the same time referring to his position in the chair of that name. Reason explains: 'I and the Law must stand with grace' ('Ic en de Wet moeten by de ghenade staen'; vs. 293), so that none will think they can help themselves (by observing the law) while being hypocritical. The Law continues: such a person undertakes good works in order to be saintly, but is actually lost. The image sketched out by Reason of himself and The Law standing with grace must have been realised on stage, since Preacher of the Word, who is after all preaching the grace of the New Testament, was probably flanked by Reason and The Law. In other words: his counsel must (also) be taken literally. Thus, the theatrical image of these three personifications standing next to each other exemplifies a theological point: they belong together. It functions as a memory image to be stamped on the mind.

The meaning of salvation through Christ and salvation through law-keeping is then explained to Man Dying by Preacher of the Word. He underlines the different roles that both serve, even though they are promulgated in the same book, the Bible, the one in the Old, the other in the New Testament. Their functions are complementary yet different: 'The law condemns, The Gospel forgives' ('De wet verdomt en devangelye vergheift'; vs. 310).⁴² Aside from Christ, the Gospel is named frequently in this part of the play. Preacher of the Word emphasises, on the basis of the promise made by God in Paradise, that in time the Gospel actually precedes the law. Additionally, the

⁴² Gerrish B.A., *Grace and Reason. A Study in the Theology of Luther* (Oxford: 1962) 108.

prophets point towards the coming of Christ. There is no escaping the conclusion that the law is a ‘servant’ (*‘dienersse’*; vs. 325) of the Gospel. She serves man by making him desire Christ, forcing him to turn toward Him (vss. 325–327), something The Law goes on twice to confirm (vss. 340, 403–404).

This explanation by Preacher of the Word rids Man Dying of his anxiety – the former calls him ‘the anxious [one]’ (*‘de benaude’*; vs. 335) and helps him lie down on the bed ‘peaceful rest’ (*‘vredelicke ruste’*; vs. 332). He gets up out of the chair of ‘anxiety’ in which he has been sitting up to now: ‘So help me out of here’ (*‘Dus helpt my hier wte’*; vs. 330), he pleads. Moreover, the message that he himself could not secure grace, merely by carrying out the law, had made him anxious (the chair). Through Preacher’s explanation, it becomes clear to him that Christ alone can grant him grace or justification.⁴³ By placing his trust in Him, he gains peace of mind (the bed). Man Dying exclaims, ‘Oh’ (*‘Och’*; vs. 328), an interjection he has not used during his didactic dialogue with Preacher of the Word. His new insight apparently incites strong emotions. While Preacher of the Word helps him out of the chair and into bed, he explains to him that ‘peaceful rest’ is granted by Christ. The verb ‘to comfort’ (*‘vertroosten’*; vs. 334) is used again: a comforting bed, in which he may rest peacefully, is what Christ offers him, which is to say, His grace. He must lie on it ‘redelic’ (vs. 333). This may be translated as ‘properly’, in the way that fits a dying person, but a translation as ‘reasonably’ is also possible.

In a certain sense, the dialogue between Man Dying and Preacher of the Word has a scholarly character. It concerns a kind of Biblical exegesis aimed at soteriology. Reason and The Law have been silent during this dialogue. As noted, they have been standing literally and figuratively beside Preacher of the Word. After Man Dying lies down, they briefly show their agreement with his words (vss. 336–340, 382–383), thus executing their support verbally. In the case of Reason, it may be assumed that simply by being there, he provides support for the didactic dialogue and its result. This suggests that Man Dying realises by means of thought duly exercised, that he gains grace through Christ. Reason helps him, as it were, to understand the relationship between law and Gospel, and to see it as logical and true, the result of rational argumentation. This also becomes apparent from

⁴³ Gerrish, *Grace and Reason* 112.

what Reason and Man Dying say during their previous discussion. Thus, Man Dying remarks: ‘This explanation is sound’ (‘Dat verstant es clouck’; vs. 314), and says: ‘only now that I think about it that way’ (‘nu ict [eerst] dus herknouwe’; vs. 328), ‘[do] I receive evangelical understanding’ (‘crijgh ic [...] devangelisch verstant’; vs. 329). Additionally, Reason underscores the words of Preacher of the Word by saying: ‘This I affirm plainly, / to be the truth, without any delusion, / As is evident’ (‘Dat beken ic blootelic / Warachtich tzyne, zonder eenigh bedrogh, / Zoot is ghebleken’; vss. 338–339).

All in all, the play describes the place of reason much more positively than one might expect, given the Lutheran aversion to it.⁴⁴ Luther identified the faculty with its illegitimate use, namely, in support legalistic religion.⁴⁵ However, in the Antwerp play Reason remains until the very end a trustworthy and indispensable companion.

Crucifixion

Now that Man Dying has understood the relationship between law and Gospel and has traded anxiety for peace of mind, the true preparation for dying, the *preparatio ad mortem*, may start. The setting reflects the general idea of man in his final moments. In late medieval times, it also found an iconographic parallel in the series of illustrations known as the *Ars Moriendi*. As a matter of fact, the similarities are not limited to the image of Man Dying in bed. Just as the dying man in the *Ars Moriendi* has several visions, which in the woodcuts are represented as if floating before his eyes, in the Antwerp play Man Dying is shown a series of tableaux vivants, which partly have the same function (and in one case also the same content) as the visions in the well-known *Art of Dying*. His attitude and tone have, by now, completely changed. He no longer asks for explanations, but instead expresses how moved he is by the sight of the living images being shown to him. The bed containing Man Dying evidently stood on the proscenium, from where he

⁴⁴ Buys, *De kunst van het weldenken* 143–144.

⁴⁵ Gerrish, *Grace and Reason* 67, see also 85–87; Snyder S., “The Left Hand of God: Despair in Medieval and Renaissance Tradition”, *Studies in the Renaissance* 12 (1965) 18–59, esp. 30. On the negative role of reason in rhetoricians’ plays, see Buys, *De Kunst van het weldenken* 137–142, 149.

watched the tableaux vivants staged (probably) in the middle opening above, and shown to him in succession.

From the moment that Man Dying goes from chair to bed, it is Preacher of the Word with whom he most converses. Reason and The Law merely confirm the content of his statements. Up to this point, the characters have been talking about Christ preaching, whose words on the law are cited (vss. 265, 270, 279). Additionally, they invoke the doctrinal argument that salvation is to be found in Him alone. However, it is only now that the nature of this salvation (and the answer to the central question) is made clear to Man Dying, in the form of living images. To introduce the visual series, Preacher of the Word points out that grace, justification and the forgiveness of sin are based on the suffering of Christ in the 'Passion' ('passye'; vs. 344). Man Dying responds in a rational way: 'Methinks that we have God as our friend, / Otherwise this would not have happened to us' ('My dijckt dat wy God hadden tot eenen vriendt, / Anders en haddet ons niet moghen gheschieden'; vss. 345–346). In the next, longer section, Preacher of the Word presents the first tableau vivant (that was to be revealed at the same time, according to a stage direction in the margin; p. 292): Christ hanging on the cross. He calls on Man Dying to look at it: 'behold how humiliated / The Son of God hung shamefully disgraced, / Wounded in His feet, side and hands' ('anziet hoe verwytelijck / De zone Gods hijngh ghediffameirt te schanden, / Ghewont duer zijn voeten, side en handen'; vss. 349–351).

Preacher of the Word then emphasises up to five times (and in ever changing wording) that Christ underwent this suffering for the absolution of (the sins of) Man Dying. The latter's short reactions are filled with emotion, as exclamations such as 'Oh' ('O'; vs. 361) and 'Ah' ('Och'; vs. 368) indicate. First, he directly addresses God, thanking Him for His charity; then he pleads with God, asking for assurance that Christ has indeed died for his sins. That this is the case is made clear to him by Preacher of the Word, when he reminds him of God's prophecy to the serpent (*Genesis 3:15*) that his head would be trampled by the seed of Eve. 'The seed of promise' ('tzaet der beloften'; vs. 374) is Christ.

The explanation has an argumentative, exegetic character, in that a connection is again made between the Old and the New Testament, a connection the validity of which is expressly confirmed by Reason and The Law (vss. 382–383). But Preacher of the Word describes this connection and its soteriological consequences in terms that seem almost

mystical, using the word ‘heart’ three times: once with reference to that of Man Dying, twice to that of Christ. Preacher of the Word explains that Christ has nailed to the cross Man Dying’s admission of sin, which was written ‘in the heart’ (‘in therte’; vs. 372) – an allusion to *Colossians* 2:14. This ‘document’ (‘handtgheschrift’; vs. 372) stands for sin, death and the serpent’s head, which, as previously noted, are trampled by Christ, ‘the seed of promise’. Christ was able to do this because He led a perfect life, ‘from the bottom of his heart’ (‘Wt gront zijns herten’; vs. 377), unsullied by worldly desires. As his outward life was ‘pure’ (‘reyne’; vs. 375), so too was ‘the heart from which fruits sprout forth’ (‘therte daer de vruchten wtspruten’; vs. 380).

All of this is said while the image of Christ on the cross remains visible. While he encourages Man Dying to keep his gazed fixed on it – ‘look’ (‘ziet’; vss. 384, 385) – Preacher of the Word reminds him of a few matters that have already been touched on: that the law stays fully in effect, so that it is clear that he cannot fulfil it, and that he incurs guilt and deserves punishment; but also that Christ removes this burden through His Passion, and so fulfils the law. Preacher of the Word aims to remove any doubts Man Dying may still harbour regarding the sacrifice that God in Christ has made for his benefit (and for mankind in general). The redemption of sin through physical suffering – the carrying of sins in Christ’s body, the cleansing of sins by His blood – is stressed through allusions to *1 Peter* 2:24 and *1 John* 1:7. They are meant to amplify the effect of the image of the Crucifixion. Everything Christ has done, He has done for the sake of man. Man Dying has only to believe. That, says The Law, is what he is there for. It seems as though he wishes to punish, but his intention is ‘to move’ (‘te drijnghene’; vs. 404) mankind to faith.

The verb ‘believe’ (‘ghelooft’, ‘gheloooven’; vss. 396, 421, 427) and the noun ‘faith’ (‘ghelooove’; vss. 416, 425) now occur for the first time in the play. ‘Live firmly / In faith’ (‘leift vastelic / Int ghelooove’; vss. 415–416), Preacher of the Word urges. He repeats this message slightly later in words that seem to underscore the conviction that only faith can save the soul. To Man Dying’s question how to thank God in words for the ‘comfort’ (‘troost’; vs. 420) he has received, Preacher of the Word replies in a paraphrase of Christ’s words in *Luke* 12:32: ‘Only by believing in Him firmly; / Surely, God’s wish is to give you / His kingdom freely’ (‘Niet dan in hem vast gheloooven; / Gods beliefte es u zekerlic schijnckende / Zijn rijcke om niet’; vss. 421–423). The assurance that Man Dying will always remain ‘sinful’ (‘zondigh’;

vs. 426) appears no less Protestant, as also does the conviction that God will forgive his sins because of Christ and his faith in Him. He points out yet again to Man Dying how bad it was to think that he could save his soul all by himself. Reason indicates her special role in this learning process. She supplements Preacher of the Word's first call to faith by saying: 'Through me you understand this readily; / as if you had done this exclusively all along' ('Ghy verstaet duer my tastelic; / Als oft ghijt al ghedaen hadt principale'; vss. 417–418). Reason thus praises man's capacity for understanding, with which religious truths may likewise be grasped.

The Triumph of Christ

Man Dying wonders where 'the heart' ('therte'; vs. 432) might find even more comfort. Apparently he has not received enough yet. Preacher of the Word urges him to rest and remain silent, and continues his argument. He explains that as 'Members of his body and limbs' ('Leden zijns lichaems en ghebeenten'; vs. 439), they who believe in Christ will live, suffer, die, be buried, and, as Christ rose from the grave, so shall they be raised.⁴⁶ A new tableau is then revealed, this time with the subject: 'Christ resurrected triumphs over the serpent and death' ('Christus verrezen zijnde triumpheirt over tserpent en de doot'; p. 296). Again Man Dying is encouraged to look at it: 'behold' ('ziet'; vs. 444). His 'heart rejoices' ('herte veriubyleirt'; vs. 447). Preacher of the Word interprets the image as 'the figure of your wedding garment' ('de figuere van u brulofts cleedt'; vs. 449), as a 'robe' ('rocke'; vs. 450) to cover himself with, as 'the new man' ('den nieuwen mensche'; vs. 451) that he puts on (*Ephesians* 4:24).

Again the metaphor contains mystical elements. The association of the risen Christ with the new man lies in the idea that Christ, through His conquest of death in the Resurrection, has made those who believe in Him party to the resurrection of the dead on the Last Day. He prepares for Man Dying 'your place' ('uwe plaatze'; vs. 457) in heaven (*John* 14:2). The association of resurrection with donning a garment or robe may have been prompted by the staging of the tableau vivant,

⁴⁶ The explanation contains allusions to *Galatians* 3:27, *Ephesians* 5:30, and *Romans* 6:4–8.

which, judging by the description, must have resembled the iconography of the Triumph of Christ, which often shows Him clothed in a red mantle and holding (the banner of) the cross in His right hand.

Man Dying praises ‘the valuable treasure’ (*wat waerder pant*; vs. 459) that God has given him: ‘Praise God, father almighty’ (*Lof God, vader almachtigh*; vs. 459). Preacher of the Word thanks God that Man Dying ‘now sees this’ (*dit zijt verzinnelic*; vs. 461). However, this insight does not mean that at this moment Man Dying grasps rationally the meaning of the Resurrection. By watching two tableaux vivants and reflecting on them with the help of his advisors, he comes to a literal realization, or better yet, insight. The play lays emphasis on scriptural argumentation and rational understanding, and yet Preacher of the Word describes the consequences of faith – the privilege of joining Christ in heaven ‘to behold my glory’ (*John 17:40*) – in terms of a *visio* or *unio Dei*, in other words, as a mystic union. Using allusions to *John 11:40* and *14:9*, he states: ‘Christ is God in a glorious way, / It’s written: who sees me, sees the father’ (*Christus es ooc God feestelic, / Tstaet gheschreven: die my ziet, ziet den vadere*; vs. 470). Furthermore he cites *John 15:4*: ‘Abide in me, and I in you’ (*Blijft in mij en ic [in] u*; vs. 463). He then tops that by saying, with an allusion to *Genesis 3:5*, that Man Dying is not only with God, but that he has ‘entered God’s dignity’ (*getreden in Gods staet*; vs. 466). David even says: ‘you are God’ (*ghy zijt God*; vs. 470; possibly an allusion to *Psalm 91:2*).

The copious paraphrasing of moments from the most mystical of the four Gospels, where the metaphor of unity and unification is prominent, leaves little room for doubt about the spiritual intentions of the playwright. Preacher of the Word asks Man Dying if he wants matters ‘proven’ (*bewezen*; vs. 472) further. According to Reason – who else – ‘enough’ has been ‘proven’ (*ghenough bewezen*; vs. 473). He asks Man Dying: ‘And is it [God’s Word] not sown this way into your heart?’ (*En eyst niet also in u herte ghezaeyt?*; vs. 474). Man Dying agrees: his ‘soul’ (*ziele*; vs. 475) – the word appears for the first time – is now silent (a reference, perhaps, to *Psalm 62:1*). What remains for him is to be delivered from his body. The Law now leaves him, since he longs for heavenly things only. Man Dying asks death ‘to consume this flesh’ (*zijt vertaerende / Dit vleesch*; vss. 480–481).

Now, the mystical meaning of what Man Dying is about to experience according to Preacher of the Word increases. He conjures up images of eternal life in words based on *Colossians 3:3–4*: ‘For you

have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory'. As Dutch equivalents for 'hid' and 'appear', we find 'verborghen' (vs. 483), 'openbaren' (vs. 484), and 'openbaer' (vs. 485). Preacher of the Word ends his speech with a paraphrase of *Romans* 1:17, that through faith the righteous shall live. The faith that is alluded to here is that in the resurrection, in the future appearance of Man Dying, described in terms that are familiar from late medieval mystic discourse. He shall 'behold' ('anschauwen'; vs. 482) his eternal life of unity with God and Christ, and will be seen 'conversing / With God and the angels in eternal celebration, / With a body in essence undefiled' ('converseren / Met God en dijnghelen int eeuwigh hoveren, / Met een lichaem int wezen onbegrypelick'; vss. 485–487). The references to spiritual vision and union supplement the biblical text, pointing to the continued effect of the medieval tradition of preparing oneself for death.

Bodily Resurrection

In answer to the competition question, Man Dying experiences the image of the risen Lord as a 'comfort' ('troost'; vs. 495), just as he had received the image of the crucified Christ. However, the question arises, how he is to resist sin, given that he has been left by God to inhabit this earth? Preacher of the Word answers, that Christ has given Himself, that is, 'His flesh and blood' ('Zijn vleesch en bloet'; vs. 494), as a 'sign' ('bekintsele'; vs. 492) of the forgiveness of sin. The earliest edition of the Ghent plays has the word 'bescuussele' here, which perhaps means something like 'purification' or 'cleansing'. The image of Christ's body and blood, and its function as a sign, quickly make us think of the words of consecration spoken by the priest during mass: 'Hoc est enim corpus meum' and 'hic est enim calix sanguinis mei'. The Catholic view held that whoever took part in the Eucharist could hope to have his mortal existence transformed into eternal life – exactly what is about to happen to Man Dying.

For the second time, Preacher of the Word asks Man Dying if he needs 'more comfort' ('meerderen troost'; vs. 495). The latter demurs, but the former says the he still cannot 'conclude' or 'decide' ('sluten'; vs. 498) 'What is the greatest comfort for man dying' ('Dwelck den mensche staervende meesten troost es'; vs. 499) – a literal reiteration of the competition's question. Man Dying cannot believe it: is it

not enough for him, a sinful man, that God sent His Son to earth to fulfil the law, that He has suffered, died and arisen – an allusion to the Apostolic Creed ('crucifixus, mortuus [...] resurrexit') – and conquered sin, death and the devil, that He allows man to die, be buried and rise with Christ, and lets him go to heaven 'spiritually' ('geestelic'; vs. 511) with Christ? Apparently not, because, as Preacher of the Word explains, the 'solution' ('solucye'; vs. 512), that is, the answer to the competition question, as also the essence of the Christian faith and the conclusion of the Apostolic Creed, is: 'The resurrection of the flesh fully in the body' ('Des vleeschs verryzenesse heel lichamelic'; vs. 515) – or in Latin: 'carnis resurrectionem'. He introduces this pronouncement with the words: 'For the Holy Apostolic Church / Believingly professes (may everyone notice this)' ('Want de helyghe apostolysche kaercke / Ghelooovende belijdt (elc hier op maercke)'; vss. 413–414).

He then cites *Job* 19:26, where physical resurrection is invoked by the promise that he from the flesh 'shall see God'. Paul is also paraphrased, specifically his statement in 1 *Corinthians* 15:55, that on the last day mortal man will say to death, 'Where is thy sting?'. The playwright again expects his audience to know the context: Paul is speaking of 'the mortal [man who] puts on immortality'. If man did not physically rise, Christ would have died for nothing and His 'comfort' ('troost'; vs. 525) would have been offered in vain. The playwright is alluding here to the last article of the Apostolic Creed: the faith in 'life eternal', 'vitam aeternam'. Man Dying will 'see' ('zien'; vs. 520) death whose 'sting' ('strale'; vs. 521) has been conquered.

For the third and last time, Preacher of the Word asks Man Dying to 'Behold' ('Ziet'; vs. 526) a tableau vivant. A note in the margin identifies it as 'the resurrection of the flesh' ('de verryzenesse des vleeschs'; p. 300) on the Last Day, when Christ will come to judge the living and the dead, 'iudicare vivos et mortuus', as the Apostolic Creed has it. It is unclear whether a complete scene of the Last Judgment was shown, with the risen dead, Christ as Judge, angels welcoming the righteous to heaven and devils taking the wicked to hell. Preacher of the Word's phrasing does suggest that at the very least Christ, and possibly the entire Trinity were shown. Man Dying will not only be justified at Last Judgement, but 'With Christ, your head, enjoy in truth / All that he has and is, with God triune' ('Met Christo, u hooft, ghebruucken inder waerheyt / Al dat hy heift en es, met God dryvuldigh'; vss. 532–533). It is especially the word 'gebruucken' that is striking in this instance. It carries the connotation of the intense experience, enjoyment or tast-

ing of love, especially divine love. It was used in mystic texts to convey succinctly the blissful experience of the *visio* or *unio Dei*. That Man Dying sees Christ (and the Trinity) also shows in the direct addresses by him and the other characters in the final part of the play: ‘Oh God’ (‘O God’; vss. 538, 549, 551), ‘Have love and thanks God’ (‘Hebt lof en danck God’; vs. 546), ‘You(r)’ (‘u’ ‘uwer’, ‘uwen’, ‘ghy’; vss. 540–543, 545, 548–551), ‘Father’ (‘vader’; vss. 541, 546).

Man Dying declares the final image to be ‘the greatest comfort’ (‘den meesten troost’; vs. 537). The tableau provides the Antwerp answer to the competition question: ‘The resurrection of the flesh’ (‘De verryzenesse des vleeschs’; p. 269). Now he commends his spirit into God’s hands, as did Christ on the cross (vs. 545; *Luke* 23:46). These too are his final words. Preacher of the Word, Reason, and Scriptural Inquiry, who has presumably returned to the stage, continue to praise God for about twenty more lines.

There seems to be no escaping the conclusion that the Antwerp play is Protestant. It emphasises that the Law only indicts and that, in the end, only the Gospel provides absolution. With his carefully constructed argument about sin, law, mercy and gospel, topics he addresses in light of biblical chronology, the playwright follows the method that Melanchthon prescribed in his *Loci Communes* for the treatment of the central themes of Lutheran doctrine. Yet the argument, from the moment it appeals to the three tableaux vivants, also follows a universal Christian line of argument. This clearly calls to mind the apostolic confession shared by both Catholics and Protestants. With its answer to the question – the resurrection of the flesh – the play remains within orthodox boundaries, or at least returns to them at its conclusion. And what of the position that reason and the law, that combination so despised by Luther, are eventually given within the developing doctrine of justification, not only verbally but also visually, as a memory-image, through their placing as personifications on the stage? In the end, they take up their positions *next to* grace; both contribute positively to the justification of man.

Conclusion

What has the chosen approach of the two plays shown? Let us turn first to the verbal discourse. When we analyse it completely and in detail, and refrain from simply looking for catch phrases associated

with the terms of *sola fides* or *sola gratia*, it turns out that the Antwerp play cannot simply be called Protestant (or Lutheran). Neither can the Kaprijke play on the grounds of this approach simply be marked as traditionally Catholic.⁴⁷ Judging from the stance taken by the Mankind character in relationship to reason and Scripture in both plays, we can say that they deal with an independently listening and thinking religious subject. As is evident from the dialogue and eventual answer to the leading question, he finds comfort at the time of his death in an inner disposition of hope for justification (Kaprijke) and belief in the resurrection (Antwerp), which is constructed through reason applied in the form of biblical arguments. Both plays formulate an attitude towards death, that rests neither on an exclusive trust in good works and sacraments (Catholic), nor on the conviction that their effects are utterly negated by the utter wickedness of mankind (Protestant). Nor is there evidence of a spiritualist approach that seeks to avoid religious controversy.⁴⁸

Both playwrights sought salvation in a kind of inwardness that did not directly touch upon the religious controversies of the time and was, in fact, confession-neutral. This fits within a tradition of lay piety dating from the early fifteenth century and earlier, that had roots in movements striving to renew spiritual life in the cities. We are dealing here with theology construed as an instrument of piety, that aims inwardly to change the devotee's relationship with God.⁴⁹ In this context, historians of religion point to the Modern Devotion. It promoted a style of devotion that was intense, inward-looking, personalised, Christ-centred, and was expressly propagated among laymen.⁵⁰ Humanists such as Erasmus built on it. This kind of religiosity

⁴⁷ Van Gelder points to the absence of any reference to the sacraments and speaks of an emphasis on ethical responsibility. See Gelder H.A.E. van, *Erasmus, schilders en rederijkers. De religieuze crisis der 16^e eeuw weerspiegeld in toneel- en schilderkunst* (Groningen: 1959) 31.

⁴⁸ Waite G.K., "Rhetoricians and Religious Compromise During the Early Reformation (c. 1520–1555)", in Happé P. – Strietman E. (eds.), *Urban Theatre in the Low Countries 1400–1625* (Turnhout: 2006) 79–102, esp. 88–92. Also see Waite, *Reformers on Stage* 153–155.

⁴⁹ Wicks S.J.J., "Johann von Staupitz under Pauline Inspiration", in Holder R.W. (ed.), *A Companion to Paul in the Reformation*, Brill's Companion to the Christian Tradition 15 (Leiden – Boston: 2009) 326.

⁵⁰ MacCulloch D., *A History of Christianity. The First Three Thousand Years* (London: 2009) 599; Collinson P., *The Reformation* (London: 2003) 15, 17–19; MacCulloch D., *Reformation. Europe's House Divided* (London: 2004) 22, 75, 93, 102; Hamm B., *The*

was expressly based on the Bible. Although the Antwerp playwright shows himself to be better versed in biblical reading than his Kaprijke counterpart, both of them demonstrate the ability to read and interpret Scripture independently, and in addition, they reveal that they are skilled at biblical argumentation. This too reflects a tradition that had started before the Reformation and showed humanist characteristics. Its implications for the visual arts and literature of the sixteenth century in the Low Countries have previously been acknowledged, but have never been fully explored.⁵¹ Sixteenth century religious history is still written to a large extent from the point of view of churchmen and theologians, doctrines and confessions, churches and communities, liturgies and devotions. However, it is just as important to consider ‘what the laymen think and thus accept, as what experts (here, theologians) devise and so offer’.⁵² What laymen, including the authors of the Antwerp and Kaprijke plays, thought and accepted, fitted a tradition of reformed Catholicism, which was current during the first half of the sixteenth century in both the Low Countries and England,⁵³ and is easily – but nevertheless wrongly – confused with Protestantism.

In the Mankind character, we are dealing with a seeing and feeling subject. When we complete the analysis of the verbal discourse by including the visual, it turns out that the inner disposition of the religious subject is, to a high degree, constructed through the use of images, most notably tableaux vivants. The Bible did not just put theological principles and ideas into words, but also provided its listeners (or readers) with visual examples (in Dutch: *voorbeelden*): the Kaprijke play bodies forth these *voorbeelden* in actions and attitudes; the Antwerp plays appeals to and shapes understanding, urging its audience to look at and ‘through’ the truth or reality that the play reveals. This use of imagery had deep roots going back to

Reformation of Faith in the Context of Late Medieval Theology and Piety, ed. R.J. Bast (Leiden – Boston: 2004) 12.

⁵¹ Especially important in this respect is Van Gelder’s *Erasmus, schilders en rederijkers*. Also see Falkenburg R.L., “Bijbelse iconografie en spiritualiteit: enkele beschouwingen over de Nederlandse schilderkunst en grafiek van de zestiende eeuw”, *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis* 15 (1988) 5–15; and Ramakers B.A.M., *Spelen en figuren. Toneelkunst en processiecultuur in Oudenaarde tussen Middeleeuwen en Moderne Tijd* (Amsterdam: 1996) 237–247.

⁵² Van Gelder, *Erasmus, schilders en rederijkers* 3.

⁵³ Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism* 4, 8, 22, 24–5, 86, 96.

late medieval mysticism, a phenomenon that spread beyond the clergy to reach laymen living in the cities.

Theatre, most prominently allegorical drama, offered playwrights the possibility of taking all that was invisible, inward and merely nameable or describable, and making it visible and apprehensible in the action and appearance of the characters. They did this in order to delve deeper into their audience's capacity for understanding and experience. In that sense, this kind of theatre juxtaposes the authority of the word – with a lower case – with the authority of the image. The same goes for the authority of the Word written with a capital letter, that is, God's Word or the Bible. This authority rested not only in the plays' verbal, concept-driven content, but also, perhaps even more, in the visual, experience-driven effects of the *historiae* and *icones*, that they described and made visible in the form of tableaux vivants. The desire for inwardness was satisfied in the first place by visual discourse, which was interpreted and experienced with the help of its verbal counterpart.

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**THE EARTHLY PARADISE:
HERRI MET DE BLES'S VISUAL EXEGESIS OF GENESIS 1–3**

Michel Weemans

God's omnivoyance over His creation is the most adequate topic for the distant and panoptic view that defines the *Weltlandschaft*.¹ The minute rendering of smallest details in Herri met de Bles's *Earthly Paradise* [Fig. 1] is perhaps even more striking than the painting's distant, all-encompassing view of the terrestrial globe. The paradox of the aerial view, capable of simultaneously grasping the whole and its parts – both synoptic and analytic – is a classical *topos* that sixteenth-century humanists and landscape painters rediscovered and made their own. These two modes are inseparable. In this essay I would like to examine the way Bles's *Paradise*, round like an eye or a mirror, thematizes sight – both far and near – according to the Christian conception of the *visio Dei*.

For Karel van Mander, the mix of a distant and a close view (or its pictorial corollary: the meticulousness of the brush) was a major characteristic of sixteenth-century Netherlandish landscape painting. In chapter 12 of his *Grondt der Edel Vrij Schilderconst*, Van Mander defined the epideictic term *netticheyt* (meticulousness) as follows:

Praiseworthy *netticheydt*, by giving sweet nourishment to the eyes, makes them tarry long, especially when joined close to it are art, spirit and boldness, and when the image retains its appeal both from afar and

¹ The term *Weltlandschaft* – world landscape – was coined by German art historians of the early twentieth century to characterize the sixteenth-century Flemish landscapes that seemed to reflect the scope and diversity of the earth's surface. Used for the first time by Eberhard von Bodenhausen in his monograph on Gerard David (1905), the expression *Weltlandschaft* was applied by Ludwig von Baldass to Patinir, and defined as the representation of 'all that which seemed beautiful to the eye: the sea and the earth, mountains and plains, forests and fields, the castle and the hut' ('Alles, was dem Auge Schön erschien: Wasser und Land, Gebirge und Ebene, Wald und Feld, Burg und Bauernhütte'). See Baldass L. von, "Die Niederländische Landschaftsmalerei von Patinir bis Bruegel", *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 34 (1918) 111–157.



Fig. 1. [COL. PL. III] Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise* (ca. 1550). Oil on wood tondo, diam. 46 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no A 780.

close by; such things entangle (the viewer) and through his insatiable eyes, makes his heart cleave fast with constant desire.² [...] Nette things

² Netticheyt is prijsich, die den ghesichte
Soet voedsel ghevende doet langhe merren
Bysonder als haer aenclevend' is dichte
Oock aerdt, gheest, en cloeckheydt, en datse lichte
Haren welstandt niet en weyghert van verren,
Niet meer als van by, sulck dinghen verwerren
Doet aen hem, en door ooghen onversadich,
T'herte vast cleven met lusten ghestadich.

Mander Karel van, *Den grondt der edel vry schilder-const* (Haarlem, Paschier van Westbusch: 1604) fol. 48r, stanza 21. See Miedema H. (ed.), *Karel van Mander, Den Grondt der edel vry schilder-const, uitgegeven en van vertaling en commentaar voorzien door Hessel Miedema*, 2 vols. (Utrecht: 1973) vol. I 258; on this passage and on the notion

that remain spirited are praiseworthy and keep the beholder long at his beholding.³

Far from being transgressive (as would later be the case in Roger de Pile's theory),⁴ close looking and pictorial meticulousness are, on the contrary, highly valued by Van Mander. Van Mander must have noticed Vasari's use of a similar notion, *minuzzie*, which in his *Vite* designates a detail of no importance. However, as in the lives of Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci, *minuzzie* often has a positive meaning.⁵ In these instances, the brushstroke's meticulousness is associated with the painter's art of reflection and his capacity to imitate nature.⁶ Like Vasari, Van Mander stresses the power of verisimilitude in the Northern painter's accuracy, but his use of the term *netticheyt* is much more frequent and, as Walter Melion has shown, he grants a more positive and crucial role to this notion in his theory of art.⁷ The idea of *netticheyt* is particularly developed in two key passages of the *Schilder-Boeck*. First, in the Life of Jan van Eyck, Van Mander explains that *netticheyt* was invented by the latter at the same time as painting in oil on wooden panels that are made to look like mirrors. The second appears in the Life of Pieter Bruegel, who for Van Mander exemplifies the acme of Netherlandish art. Here, *netticheyt* is associated with *naer het leven* – the striking imitation of nature from life that allows a painting to ensnare the viewer's gaze.⁸ Finally, by rhyming *netticheyt* with *gheesticheyt* (full of spirit), Van Mander stresses the idea that

of *netticheyd* in Van Mander's theory, see Melion W.S., *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon. Karel van Mander's Schilder-Boeck* (Chicago – London: 1991) esp. 60–63, 78–79, 107–108.

³ Van Mander, *Den grondt*, fol. 48r: 'Nette dinge, die noch de gheesticheyd behoude, zijn prijselijck, en houden den aenschouwer lange speculerende'. This remark is added in a marginal note.

⁴ Piles R. de, *Conférence du 4 février 1708*, in Thuillier J. (ed.), *Cours de peinture par principes* (1709) (Paris: 1989) 264.

⁵ Meticulousness logically occupies a prominent place in the Life of Giulio Clovio, the miniaturist called 'new little Michelangelo', whose figures of the Last Judgement, painted on a cameo and tiny as ants, produce, says Vasari, the effect of giants. See Vasari Giotgio, *La vie de Don Giulio Clovio*, in Chastel A. (ed.), *La vie des meilleurs peintres, sculpteurs et architectes* (1568), 2 vols. (Arles: 2005) vol. II 149–160.

⁶ This notion plays a central role in the life of Leonardo, in particular in the ekphrasis of his masterpiece, the *Mona Lisa*. In the Life of Raphael, meticulous painting also demonstrates the ability of painting to be truer than life, to match sculpture in the round and even to suggest the sensation of touch.

⁷ Melion, *Shaping*, see note 1.

⁸ Two meanings, recalls Melion, which are to be found in the English equivalent 'neatness' used by Nicholas Hilliard in his 'Art of Limning', wherein he associates the

meticulous rendering stimulates and captivates the beholder's gaze, engaging him in the prolonged activity of viewing and renewing his scopophilic desires.⁹

In Bles's religious landscapes the role of pictorial *netticheyt* is amplified by the exegetical meaning of the notion, for the exegetes also defended a principle of meticulousness. In a parallel formulated by Origen, in the same way that Divine Presence extends even to the slightest elements of creation, Divine Inspiration extends to the slightest iota, the slightest letter of the Scriptures, as if breathed upon them.¹⁰ Consequently, one who observes the world, like one who reads the Scriptures, must respond to the meticulousness with which God has composed His two books, the Book of Nature and the Book of Scriptures. Relying on Jesus' injunction: 'Search the Scriptures' (*John* 5:39), Origen asserts that one who interprets the Bible must attend to the most minute details, an operation he calls 'scrupulous reading'.¹¹ The idea that the universal presence of God in the world and in Scripture extends to the smallest parts of creation, down to the smallest letter of the text, is found in other Christian and Stoic writers, such as Basil of Caesarea: 'the Lord has impressed upon this small animal a visible trace of His great wisdom', or Plutarch: 'even the smallest particles

miniaturist's neat work both with verisimilitude and with the idea of 'cunning' or a trap for the eyes; see *ibidem* 61.

⁹ *Ibidem* 60–63.

¹⁰ See Lewis G. (ed.), *The Philocalia of Origen. A compilation of selected passages of Origen's works made by St Gregory of Nazianzus and St Basil of Caesarea* (Edinburgh: 1911) 32–33: 'And perhaps this is why the Saviour says, "One jot or one title shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished". For if we study Creation we see that the Divine skill is shown not only in heaven, in the sun, moon, and stars, being everywhere evidenced in those bodies, but also upon earth no less in commoner matter: so that the bodies of the smallest living creatures are not scornfully treated by the Creator, much less the souls existing in them, each having some peculiar gift, something to ensure the safety of the irrational creature. And as for plants, neither are they overlooked, for the Creator is immanent in every one, as regards roots, and leaves, appropriate fruits, and varying qualities. So, too, we conceive of all that has been recorded by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, believing that the sacred foreknowledge has through the Scriptures supplied superhuman wisdom to the race of man, having, so to speak, sown the seeds of saving truths, traces of the wisdom of God, in every letter as far as possible'.

¹¹ *Ibidem* 22: 'The reader must therefore, following the Saviour's injunction to search the Scriptures, carefully examine where the literal meaning is true, and where it cannot possibly be so'. Cf. *ibidem* 39: 'It is described even in the Pentateuch; but also in each of the Prophets, and in the Psalms, and, generally, as the Saviour Himself says, in all the Scriptures, to which He refers us, bidding us to Search the Scriptures' (*John* 5:39).

of the world are guided by the Divine Will'.¹² However, the idea of providential meticulousness in Origen is rich in hermeneutical consequences. Two fundamental and corollary principles of his exegesis resulting from this idea should be mentioned here. The first is that the meaning of the texts themselves does not appear upon first reading, because the Spirit inspiring Scriptures pursues two goals, one of which is to reveal to men the mysteries useful for their salvation, and the other, to hide these mysteries under cover of historical narratives. This is why the Spirit of God has 'introduced into the Scriptures "stumbling blocks": barriers to understanding, so that the reader knows that a meaning must be sought other than the obvious meaning. The aim is to engage inquiring and diligent minds in the work of interpreting the Scriptures, firmly to convince them of the need to search in such passages for something worthy of God'.¹³ The second principle of exegesis stemming from the notion of meticulousness is the idea that the meaning of each parcel of the Scriptures is not isolable. He explains this through a second parallel: in the same way that each part of the world is dependent on every other part (according to a model of organic unity), as in a single body wherein everything is one, the Scriptures form a coherent whole, inspired by the same Divine Plan. The exegete should therefore not simply explain each word individually; he must discover the overall meaning dispersed like seeds or scattered like flowers across all parts of the Book. In other words, only attention paid jointly to both the littlest parts and the coherent

¹² Harl M., "Introduction à la Philocalie d'Origène", in idem (ed.), *Origène, Philocalie 1–20. Sur les Écritures* (Paris: 1983) 66, note 2. The idea of the divine presence within the smallest particle of creation became a *topos* and was often associated with the metaphor of the book of nature. Luis de Granada claims in his *Introducción del Simbolo de la fe* (Lisbon, Herederos de Matías Gast: 1559) 74: 'The wisdom and providence of God is reflected both in the smallest things and in the large'.

¹³ Lewis (ed.), *Philocalia of Origen* 28: 'But if in reading the Scripture thou shouldst sometime stumble at a meaning which is a fair stone of stumbling and rock of offence, blame thyself. Do not despair of finding meanings in the stone of stumbling and rock of offence, so that the saying may be fulfilled, He that believeth shall not be ashamed. First believe, and thou shalt find beneath what is counted a stumbling-block much gain in godliness'. Ibidem 51: 'Of things in the Divine Scripture which seem to come near to being a stumbling-block and rock of offence. From, the Homily on Jeremiah: "The Lord could not bear because of the evil of your doings!" I. If at anytime in reading the Scripture you stumble at something which is a fair stone of stumbling, and rock of offence, I blame yourself; for you must not despair of finding in this stone of stumbling and rock of offence thoughts to justify the saying, "He that believeth shall not be ashamed". First believe, and thou shalt find beneath what is deemed a stumbling-stone much gain in godliness'.

whole that comprises them, allows one to discover the truths about men, the world and the Divine Plan, the goal of which is salvation through Christ.

André Godin has evinced Origen's profound influence on the exegetes of the sixteenth century and in particular on Erasmus. The organic and harmonious consistency Origen formulates through metaphors of the circle and body is the expression of a deep Christocentrism, to which the humanist of Rotterdam was particularly sensitive. Erasmus also defended the usefulness of '*exegetical minutiae*', even if he was more moderate and regularly warned against the numerous errors found in biblical translations.¹⁴ He adopted two of Origen's major statements. First, the idea that each party is organically connected with all the others; Scripture, like the world, forms a single whole, whose metaphorical expression is the body or circle of which Christ is the head or the centre. For Erasmus it is insufficient to discover an original interpretation for a particular word. What is important is to record the interpretation of the part in its relation to the whole, the coherence of which is the Divine Plan. Second, like Origen, Erasmus emphasized the importance of obscure and enigmatic passages (sometimes a single word) scattered throughout the Scriptures, that aim to provoke further study and to exercise the spirit of the reader. The attention to minute details inseparable from the whole on the one hand (with the Christocentric, typological and eschatological dimension this implies), and on the other, the attention to enigmatic details –'stumbling stones' (Origen) or instances of 'holy cunning' (Erasmus) – intended to challenge and to give rise to interpretation, constitute the exegetical rules from which I propose to analyze Bles's *Earthly Paradise*.

Enno Boeke and Luc Serck's previous analyses of this picture have shown how the painter, according with his usual practice, drew inspiration from a series of prints. First and foremost was Master MS's large woodcut illustrating Book 1 of Genesis in Martin Luther's Bible, published in Wittenberg in 1534 [Fig. 2].¹⁵ Like the woodcut, Bles's tondo is based on the diagrammatic representation of the four elements and

¹⁴ See Godin A., *Érasme lecteur d'Origène* (Geneva: 1982) 248–411.

¹⁵ Master MS, *The Paradise*, woodcut, Luther Bible, Wittenberg, published by Hans Luft, 1534. For a description of the engravings copied by Bles, see Boeke E., *Rondom het paradijsverhaal* (Wassenaar: 1974) 78, 158–163; Serck L., *Henri Bles et la peinture de paysage dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux avant Bruegel*, Thèse de doctorat, Université de Louvain La Neuve (Louvain: 1990) 171–189.



Fig. 2. Master MS, *Earthly Paradise*, woodcut frontispiece to Book I of *Biblia, das ist, die gantze Heilige Schrift* (Wittenberg, Hans Lufft: 1534).

the seven days of Creation, beginning with the passage from darkness to light on the first day and continuing until the contemplation of universe by the Creator on the final day. The twisted border corresponds to the second day, when the firmament forms from the separation of the upper and lower waters [Fig. 3]. The vegetal proliferation, along with the seas and the mountains, signifies the third day. The (anthropomorphic) sun and moon painted on the border denote the fourth day and stress the renewal and polarity of darkness and light [Fig. 4]. The fish and the flocks of birds symbolize the fifth day. The presence of Adam and Eve among an abundance of animals represents the creation of mammals and man on the sixth day. Finally, the distant and omnivoyant God in a radiant circle at the top of the woodcut illustrates the seventh day. However, the differences between the painting and the woodcut are as striking as are the similarities. Not only has omnivoyant God disappeared, but more importantly Bles associates the representation of the Creation story from Book 1 of *Genesis* with the scenes of the Creation of Eve from Book 2, and with the scenes of the Fall and the Expulsion from Book 3 of *Genesis*.

Bles's unusual synthesis developed from his practice of borrowing figures from prints: in addition to the Master MS' Paradise print, Bles's tondo [Figs. 5, 6, and 7] copies three prints by Heinrich Aldegrever (extracted from his *Story of the Creation* of 1540) – the *Creation of Eve*, *God's Warning* and the *Fall* [Figs. 8, 9, and 10] – and two prints from Albrecht Dürer's *Small Passion* series of 1510 – the *Fall* and the *Expulsion from Paradise* [Figs. 11–12].¹⁶ Bles thus deploys a unique synthesis in his painting that requires our full attention. For Enno Boeke, the gap between the painting and the woodcut by the Master MS – a difference consisting of the elimination of the omnivoyant God, the absence of one of the four elements, and the omission of the radiant circle of light around God – corresponds to a ‘misunderstanding of the story of the Creation considered as a whole’ and to an ‘iconographic impoverishment’.¹⁷ Luc Serck for his part explains the exclusion of

¹⁶ Dürer's woodcuts of the *Fall* and the *Expulsion* are plates 2 and 3 from the *Small Passion*. Aldegrever's *Creation of Eve*, *Warning* and *Fall* are plates a, b and c from *The Creation*. The deer in the foreground also come from an engraving by Aldegrever: see *Eve Receives the Forbidden Fruit from the Serpent* of 1528 (8.1 × 5.8 cm.). On these print sources, see Boeke, *Rondom* 78, 158–163; Serck, *Henri Bles* 171–189.

¹⁷ Boeke, *Rondom* 77, 83: ‘Herri met de Bles laat de Schepper weg. Zijn doelstelling is een heel andere. Hij is een landschapschilder voor wie Genesis alleen maar een aanleiding is. [...] Hij neemt alle landschapmotieven van de lutherse houtsnede over,



Fig. 3. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of the border.

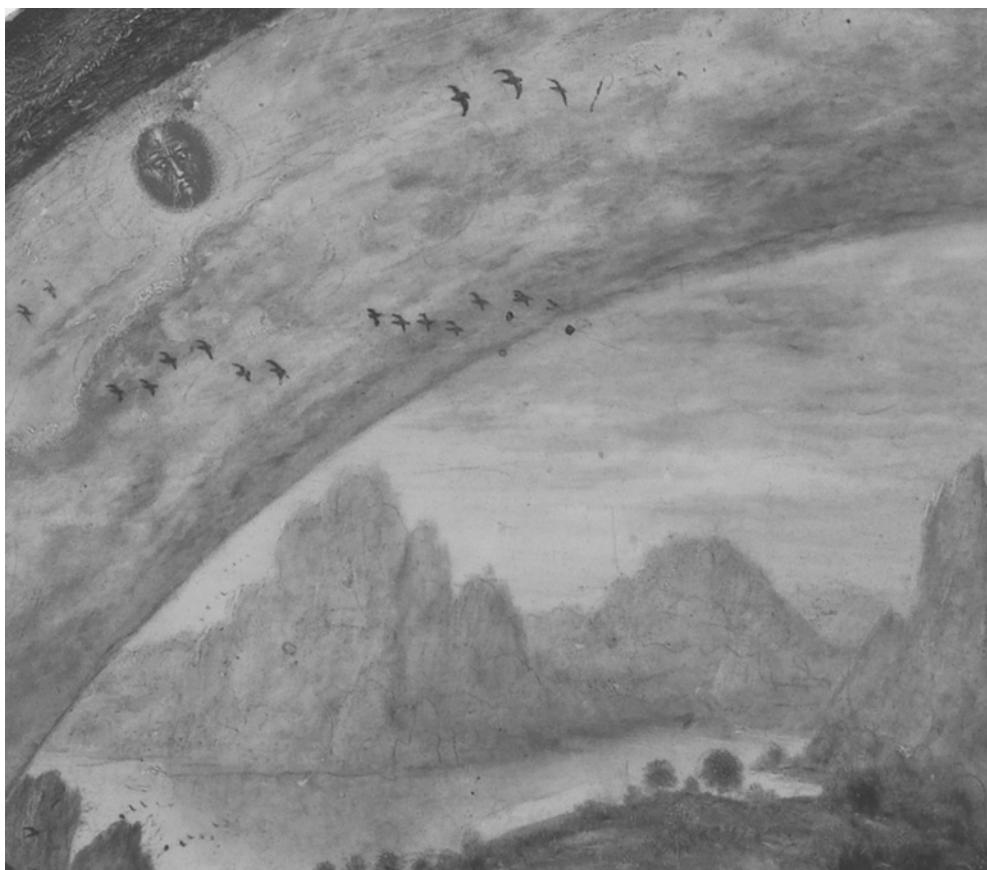


Fig. 4. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of the sun.

God as a ‘material accident’: according to him, this figure was part of a lost sculpted and polychromed frame, a common element of domestic altars.¹⁸ More problematic than this hypothesis, however, is the insistent claim that Bles’s tondo simply ‘follows scrupulously the biblical narrative and the illustration of Luther’s Bible’.¹⁹ This same idea is rephrased in a recent article by Jan Piet Filedt Kok who describes

maar past ze aan zijn eigen karakter aan. [...] Waarschijnlijk heeft Herri de zin ervan niet goed begrepen. Holbein had op zijn beide bladen de Scheper een merkwaardige hoofdtooij gegeven, een combinaite van kroon en mijter. Aldegrever neemt dit over en ook Herri met de Bles zal het overnemen, hoewel met minder begrip’.

¹⁸ Serck, *Henri Bles* 173.

¹⁹ Serck, *Henri Bles* 177.



Fig. 5. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of the Creation of Eve.

Bles's depiction of *Paradise* in terms of 'narrative function'.²⁰ Favoring a correspondence between narrative and image, or between the printed source and its painted copy, has tended to oversimplify the pictorial thought at work here and has led to negative conclusions expressed as 'iconographic misunderstanding' or 'material accident'. These traditional iconographic approaches overlook another visual logic internal to the image. None of these studies has considered the

²⁰ Filedt Kok J.P., "Het Paradijs van Herri Bles", in Abrahamse J.E. – Carasso-Kok M. – Schmitz E. (eds.), *De verbeelde wereld. Liber amicorum voor Boude Wijn Bakker* (Bussum: 2008) 104–111.



Fig. 6. [COL. PL. IIIA] Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of the Fall.



Fig. 7. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of the Expulsion.

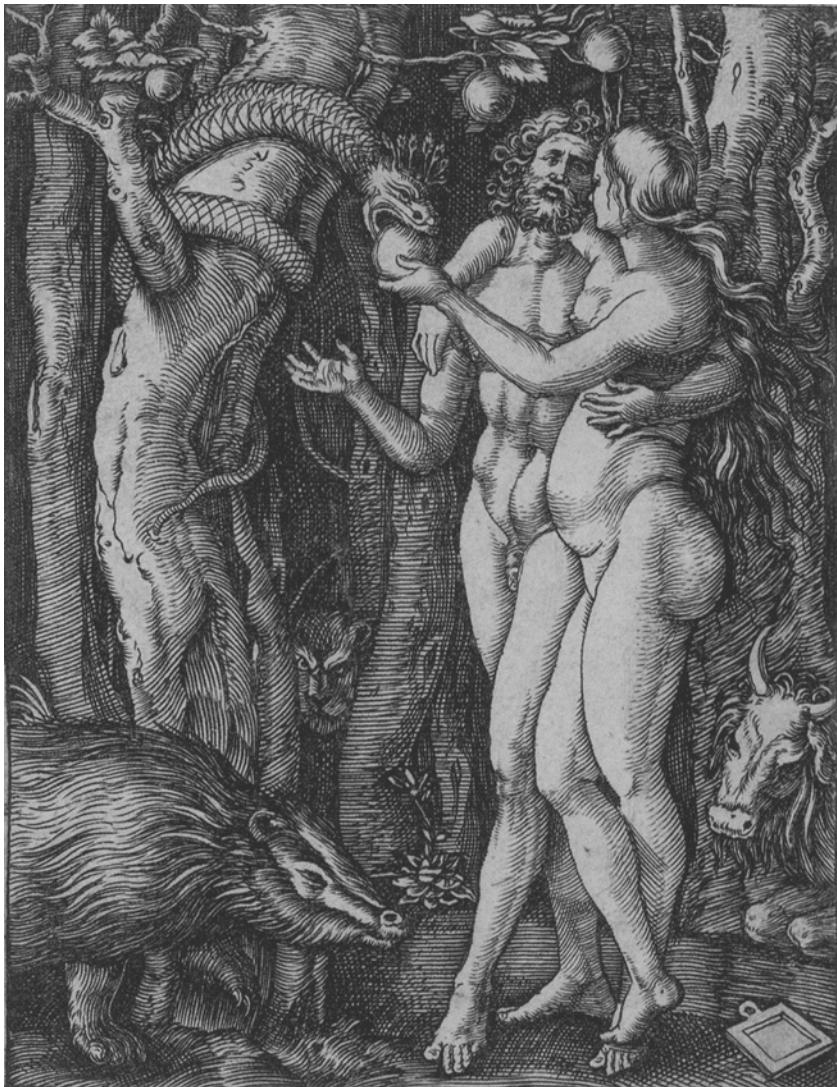


Fig. 8. Albrecht Dürer, *The Fall*, block 2 from the *Small Passion* (1510/11).
Woodcut, 12.7 × 9.7 cm. The British Museum, AN38530001.



Fig. 9. Albrecht Dürer, *The Expulsion*, block 3 from the *Small Passion* (1510/11).
Woodcut, 12.7 × 9.7 cm. The British Museum, E.3.38.



Fig. 10. Heinrich Aldegrever, *The Creation of Eve*, plate a from the *Narrative of the Creation* (1540). Engraving, 8.8 × 6.4 cm. The British Museum, AN124589001.

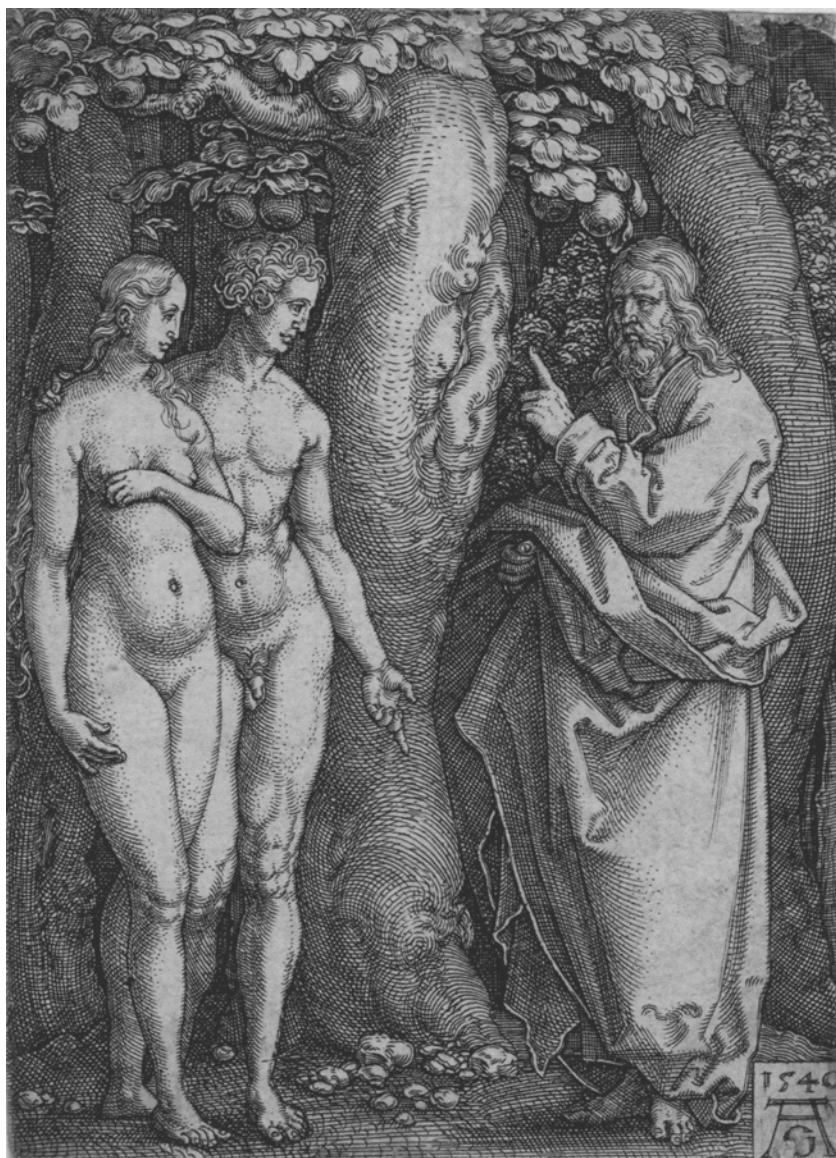


Fig. 11. Heinrich Aldegrever, *The Warning*, plate b from the *Narrative of the Creation* (1540). Engraving, 9.7 × 6.4 cm. The British Museum, AN124594001.

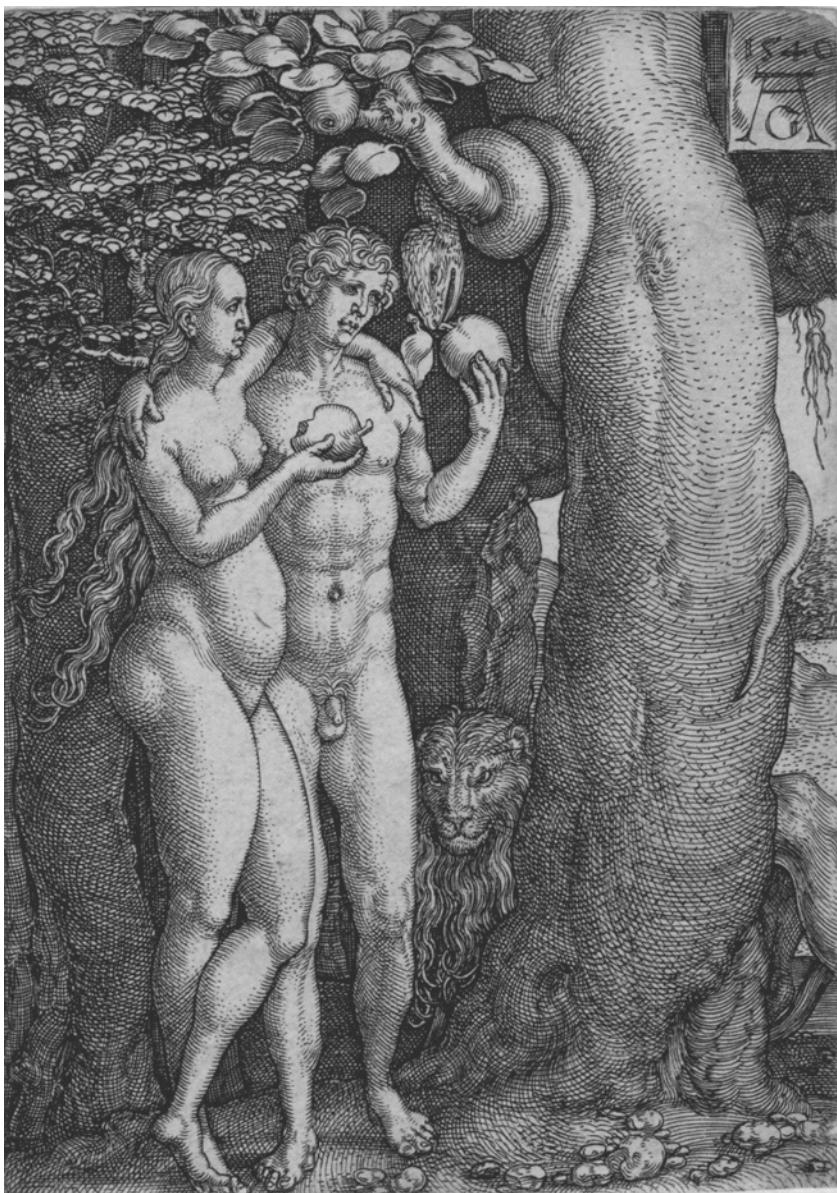


Fig. 12. Heinrich Aldegrever, *The Temptation*, plate c from the *Narrative of the Creation* (1540). Engraving, 8.8 × 6.4 cm. The British Museum, AN124590001.

possibility that the painting does not simply ‘illustrate a narrative but visualizes an interpretation’,²¹ in other words, the painting should be approached in terms of visual exegesis. Hypothesizing landscape as visual exegesis implies an image’s ability to arouse a dynamics of hermeneutical conversion, a dynamics implemented by devices such as typological relations, the articulation (specific to landscape painting) of the Book of Scriptures with the Book of Nature, and (in a painting whose meticulousness demands correspondingly close observation) the role of hermeneutical details: details in the sense of tiny figurative units that suppose the attentive activity of the gaze and, as Daniel Arasse has shown, once related to the whole, modify the global meaning of the work.²² In other words, my analysis starts where the previous ones stop and engages with several neglected aspects of Bles’s painting, which seem to me to be related: the synthetic dimension of his exegesis, the underlying theme of the *visio Dei* that justifies the latter, and the depiction of minute details (often pictorial inventions that stand outside the iconographic norm) that can be considered the visual equivalents of Origen’s ‘stumbling blocks’ or Erasmus’s ‘holy cunning’.

The Synthetic and Soteriological Exegesis of Paradise

There is a long tradition of synthetic exegesis articulating the three chapters of *Genesis*.²³ I will briefly outline some of its aspects, not in order to reduce or submit pictorial thought to a textual model, but rather better to identify some of the assertions and tensions that intersect with the textual interpretation and Bles’ pictorial interpretation. For many exegetes (following Origen), the Creation of Man, introduced in chapter 1 and in more detail in the narrative of the Creation

²¹ Berdini, P., *The Religious Art of Jacopo Bassano. Painting as Visual Exegesis* (Cambridge: 1997) xii.

²² Arasse D., *Le détail. Pour une histoire rapprochée de la peinture* (Paris: 1992).

²³ See in particular Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram*, eds. P. Agaëse – A. Solignac (Paris:1972); Calvin J., *Sermons sur la Genèse*, ed. M. Engammare (Neukirchen – Vluyn: 2000); Chrisostome John, *La Genèse. Huit discours traduits*, ed. P. Soler – P. Ellul (Paris: 1982); Luther M., *Commentaire du livre de la Genèse*, in *Œuvres*. Vol. XVII, ed. R.H. Esnault (Geneva: 1977); Melanchton Philipp, *In obscuriora aliquot capita Geneseos Phil. Melanc. Annotationes* (Hagenau, Johann Setzer: 1523); Musculus Wolfgang, *In Mosis Genesim plenissimi commentarii* (Basel, Johan Herwagen: 1554); Origenes, *Homélies sur la Genèse*, ed. H. de Lubac (Paris: 1944).

of Adam and Eve in chapter 2, must be allegorically interpreted as the difference between spiritual or interior man (made in the image and likeness of the Creator) and material man – ‘shaped in silt and fed with earthly desires’.²⁴ Furthermore, ‘Man’ must be divided into male and female according to a process of removal that culminates in chapter 3 with the Fall and Expulsion. To summarize it briefly, the story of the Creation corresponds to a progressive movement of division and detachment from the original principle and unity.²⁵ But the Divine Plan, in its perfect circularity, includes the reverse movement of a return. The necessity – included in the Divine Plan – of return to an original unity and purity answers humanity’s progressive movement away from the Creator, described in chapters 2 and 3 of *Genesis*. To the creation by the Father there responds the re-creation by the Son, or in the words of medieval exegetes including Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas: to the *exitus* there answers the *reditus*, the possibility of return through the New Adam answers to the Expulsion from Paradise resulting from Adam’s Sin. The book of Genesis always inspired a plethora of interpretations. In the Renaissance, however, deep interest in the question of origins and vast historical and philological projects centering on the Bible contributed to an intensifying wave of exegesis and rewriting of the Genesis narrative.²⁶ The episode of the Fall in particular crystallized many of the issues fueling the debate between Catholics and Protestants around truth and falsehood, faith and grace, sexuality and male or female responsibility in the First Sin.²⁷

Numerous texts (exegeses, plays, poems) dedicated to the book of Genesis in the sixteenth century rarely isolated the Fall from the context of the Creation. Instead, sin was anchored in the wider history of the Divine Plan that included, as its consequence, redemption through Christ.²⁸ From Pietro Aretino’s *Genesis* (1538) to Maurice Sceve’s *Microcosme* (1562) and Guillaume du Bartas’s *La Sepmaine* (1578), the narrative of the Fall formed part of a soteriological and eschatological history of the world that ranged from the Creation to

²⁴ See Origenes, *Les Écritures, océan de mystères. I. La Genèse*, ed. A. Égron, A. (Paris: 1998) 39.

²⁵ See Beauchamp P., *Création et Séparation, Étude exégétique du chapitre premier de la Genèse* (Paris: 1970).

²⁶ See Delumeau J., *Une histoire du Paradis*, 3 vols. (Paris: 1992–2003); Wajeman L., *La parole d’Adam, le corps d’Ève. Le péché originel au XVI^e siècle* (Geneva: 2006).

²⁷ As shown by Wajeman, *La parole d’Adam* 21–74.

²⁸ Ibidem 28 ff.

the Last Judgment, and beyond to the living literary tradition of the *Specula*.²⁹ However, as Lise Wajeman has recently argued, during the sixteenth century the visual arts, in contrast to texts, tended to give a new autonomy to isolated biblical episodes, and in particular to the Fall. The synthetic and eschatological representations of *Genesis* 1–3 are, although rare, not completely absent in the visual arts, and Bles's synthetic vision of Paradise is no exception.³⁰ His painting belongs to a practice whose origin lies at this milestone in the history of visual exegesis, that are the medieval circular and diagrammatic representations of Paradise analyzed by Anna Esmeijer.³¹ Several variants of the *Speculum Virginum* show a circular Paradise containing a central medallion with Christ connected by the four rivers of Paradise and a series of radiating branches extending to a large circle composed of medallions representing the four evangelists, the four cardinal virtues, the four fathers of the church and the eight beatitudes. In these images, Christ is typologically associated with the female figure of *Ecclesia* and with the heavenly fountain: the book he holds is adorned with a quote from the Gospel of John: 'Si quis sitit, veniat ad me et bibat' (*John* 7:37: 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink'). The structure of the diagram relies on numerical schemas and correspondences that suggest that the soul, imbued with virtues and blessings, the 'celestial disciplines' of the Gospels and the doctrine of the Church, will finally

²⁹ Among the rewritings of Genesis during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see in particular: Aretino Pietro, *Il Genesi* (Venise, Francesco Marcolini: 1539); idem, *La Genese*, trans. Jean de Vauzelles (Lyon, Sébastien Gryphus: 1542); Bartas Guillaume Saluste du, *La Sepmaine*, (Genève, Jacques Chouet: 1581); idem, *La Seconde Sepmaine* (Paris, L'huilier: 1584); Scève Maurice, *Microcosme* (Lyon, Jean de Tourmes: 1563); Voit Valten, *Ein schön lieblich spiel, von dem herlichen ursprung: Betrübtem fal. Gnediger widerbrengunge* (Magdebourg, Michael Lotther: 1538). On the typological and soteriological dimension in the literary genre of the Mirror or *Speculum*, see in particular Bange P., "Vijftiende eeuwse Speculum-literatur in de Nederlanden: een verkenning van terrein en material", *Archief voor de Geschiedenis van de Katholieke Kerk in Nederland* 22 (1980) 122–153; idem, *Spiegels der christenen. Zelfreflectie en ideaalbeeld in laat-middeleeuwse moralistisch-didactische traktaten* (Nijmegen: 1986); Cardon B., *Manuscripts of the Speculum Humanae Salvationis in the Southern Netherlands (ca. 1410–ca. 1470). A Contribution to the Study of the 15th Century Book Illumination and of the Function and Meaning of Historical Symbolism* (Leuven: 1996); Daniëls L.M.F., *De Spieghel der menscheliker behoudenesse: de middelnederlandse vertaling van het 'Speculum humanae salvationis'* (Tielt: 1949).

³⁰ Wajeman, *La parole d'Adam* 29. Lucas Cranach devoted no fewer than 30 paintings to the subject of original sin.

³¹ Esmeijer A., *Divina Quaternitas: A Preliminary Study in the Method and Application of Visual Exegesis* (Amsterdam: 1978).

reach heaven. The visual diagram and its commentary aim to rouse the reader/beholder's mind to an exegetical meditation, consisting of a quadripartite scheme (*paradisus quatripartitus*) and a fourfold exegesis of sense (*paradisus quadruplex*): the image of Paradise refers, at the level of *historia*, to the garden of Eden created by God, from where four rivers flow; at the level of *allegoria*, to Christ and *Ecclesia* (the four rivers correspond to the four gospels emanating from the central spring, Christ); at the level of *tropologia*, to Man who in his perfection harmoniously contains four virtues; at the level of *anagogia*, to the end time when Paradise will be restored.³² One of the illuminated manuscripts of the *Speculum Virginum* stresses a Christological and soteriological interpretation by placing in the central medallion the *Agnus Dei* bearing a triumphant banner connected to a circle of medallions representing the cosmos dominated by Christ as Judge at the Apocalypse.³³

Some soteriological and synthetic representations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, such as the so-called *Bible of Lévis and Antoinette d'Anduze* (BNF, Ms. Fr. 6–7), showing in the frontispiece the creation sequence from Genesis encircling a central medallion of Christ, can be associated with this tradition.³⁴ However, this schematic

³² The image of Paradise in the *Speculum Virginum* is closely tied to the text. The latter takes the form of a discussion between a master and a student; based on the images, this format allows for the recapitulation of textual arguments. On the didactic function of the exegetical diagrams, see Esmeijer, *Divina Quaternitas* 62.

³³ In the London version, it is flanked by a second figure of Christ who carries the cross and is surrounded by the instruments of the Passion, whereas the medallions with symbols of the four evangelists brandish four inscriptions that refer to the four mysteries of Christ: *carne dei* (incarnation), Matthieu/ *morit* (death), Luc/ *mors mortis* (resurrection), Marc / *ad alta levatur* (ascent), Jean. The four letters of the name of Adam appear at the four cardinal points of the cross, which are connected both to the evangelists (creating a new relationship with Christ as the only source from which flow the four rivers of the Gospels) and to personifications of the four cardinal virtues. These in turn create a link between the microcosm (in the sense not of the body but the soul represented by the four virtues) and the macrocosm schematically symbolized by the cardinal points. See Esmeijer, *Divina* 65–66.

³⁴ Some biblical frontispieces also provide a synoptic view of the first three books of Genesis by superimposing three or four registers of Genesis episodes from the creation of Adam to the Expulsion. This particular case, in contrast to Bles's *Paradise*, is less a synthetic representation than an imbrication of simple sequences synoptically encompassing a narrative cycle. What merits our attention is the clear soteriological emphasis of these images, usually outlined in the accompanying commentary. On this mode of narrative representation of Genesis, mainly developed in illuminated Bibles, and sometimes translated into murals, see in particular Klein P., "Les images de la Genèse de la Bible carolingienne de Bamberg et la tradition des frontispices bibliques

mode remained exceptional; a more current formula consisted in a synthetic narrative that brings together in a single landscape two or three episodes – generally the Fall and the Expulsion – as exemplified by Erhard Schoen's influential engraving of *Paradise* (1518).³⁵ It can also include up to five episodes, from the Creation to the Expulsion, as seen in the engravings of Paradise by Cranach the Younger, Hans Brosamer or Jost Amman.³⁶ In these examples the typological and eschatological perspective is not directly present in the image; it is present instead in the textual commentary or in the construction of a narrative series connecting several images. This is precisely the case with Bles's copies of Dürer's woodcuts, which also inspired Erhard Shoen's synthetic engraving. Boeke and Serck's studies have traced the iconographic genealogy by connecting Dürer's and Aldegrever's engravings to Bles's tondo, but by limiting their analysis to formal borrowings, they have neglected to consider the semantic context of these images, their typological and soteriological dimension that could not escape Bles' attention as an painter-exegete. It is essential to remember that Dürer's *Fall* and *Expulsion* did not belong to a cycle of the Creation but was a prologue to his *Small Passion* (1511), a booklet devoted mainly to the representation of the Passion cycle and the Resurrection. The woodcuts' tripartite compositions and their accompanying texts by the Benedictine monk Chelidonus, also connect this book to the genre of *Specula humanae salvationis* that were structured according to a typological logic and offered a reflection on redemption. This also applies to Aldegrever's *God Creating Eve from Adam's Rib*, that formed the prologue to a *Dance of Death* (1541) composed in a similar tripartite pattern marked by a soteriological perspective and ending with a Last

de Tours", in *Texte et Image. Actes du colloque international de Chantilly* (Paris: 1984) 77–107; Ortega-Tillier V., *Le Jardin d'Eden. Iconographie et topographie dans la gravure (XV^e–XVIII^e siècles)* (Dijon: 2006) 153 ff.

³⁵ Schoen's engraving depicts Adam and Eve committing the original sin and their expulsion from Paradis; see *Biblia cum concordantijs veteris [et] novi testamenti [...]* (Lyon, Jacques Sacon for Anton Koberger: 1518) 27.

³⁶ These representations of Genesis are comparable to Bles's tondo, the latter having a more synthetic dimension that anticipates the representations of Paradise to be developed later in the context of Jesuit meditative literature that closely associates text and image. See, for instance, the engraved frontispiece *De la Création au Déluge*, in Girard Antoine, S.J., *Peintures Sacrées* (Paris, Antoine de Sommaville: 1665). In this example, the first three books of Genesis are considered in a typological and eschatological perspective, highlighted by the parallels between Adam and Christ the New Adam, and between Eve and Mary, who stands for the Church (born of the body of Christ as Eve was born of Adams's body).

Judgment [Fig. 10].³⁷ To sum up, what should be emphasized in these examples – whether synthetic prints or individual images embedded in cycles – is the typological and soteriological model underlying these representations of Genesis. It is this same schema (distinct from the text-image model and serial cycles that characterize the prints) that Bles's tondo implements, as we shall see, through a series of formal procedures and minute details.

Bles's Visual Exegesis of the Earthly Paradise

The above examples should make us attentive to the motif occupying the center of Bles's tondo (but absent in the Master MS engraving): the Fountain of Life [Fig. 13]. As noted by Boeke and Serck, this motif derives from the inner left panel representing *Paradise* in Hieronymus Bosch's *Last Judgment Triptych*. Here again what is important to note is the typological and eschatological dimension of the original context, which remains present in Bles's painting.³⁸ What strikes the viewer first is the unusual association of the fountain with a recurring motif in Bles' landscapes: the ploughed field, clearly identifiable by its geometrical contours.³⁹ The juxtaposition of the field and fountain in the center of Paradise confers a dimension of prolepsis that aims to indicate the postlapsarian consequences of the Genesis narrative: the condition of labor to which Man is condemned after the Fall. In addition to this, the typological and traditional association of the Fountain of Paradise and Christ – who addresses his warning to the first couple – makes Him recognizable as the second Adam and new

³⁷ Other representations of Original Sin and the Expulsion in the sixteenth century follow a similar pattern. See, for instance, the famous *Icones mortis* or *Simulacres et historiees faces de la Mort* (1526) by Hans Holbein, whose prologue includes two engravings representing *The Fall* and *The Expulsion*, and which concludes with a *Last Judgment*.

³⁸ Hieronymus Bosch, *Triptych of the Last Judgment*, interior left wing, Bruges, Groeninge museum. On this motif from Bosch's *Triptych of the Last Judgment* (Bruges, Groeninge Museum) and its provenance, see Boeke, Rondom 76; Serck, *Henri Bles* 175, 180, 185.

³⁹ It appears in various paintings by Bles, such as the *Vocation of Peter* (Kreuzlingen, Collection Kisters), *The Preaching of John the Baptist* (Paris, Gallery De Jonkheere), and *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt* (Basel, Kunstmuseum).



Fig. 13. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of the fountain and the Warning.

Fons vitae.⁴⁰ Even more striking, and also outside the standard iconographical tradition, another detail deserves our attention: the presence of the Father and Son within the same painting [Fig. 14]. This duality, neglected by previous studies, is nevertheless the fulcrum of Bles's synthetic exegesis.

⁴⁰ It is for this reason that the motif of water became in Christian literature a symbol of the circular perfection of Creation (inspired by the physical law of water that descends and ascends). This is what Bles's *Paradise* visualizes in the stream that flows from the central *fons vitae* towards peripheral oceans and in the reflux signified by the celestial waters painted on the round border of the painting (which in turn refer to the original distinction between the waters below and above).



Fig. 14. [COL. PL. IIIb] Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of the Creator Father and Son.

Enno Boeke's study focused on the figure of God the Father and noted the particularity of His crown-tiara with a crescent moon at the top.⁴¹ The tiara-crown, as he explains, refers to both the earthly and spiritual power of the Creator, whereas the crescent moon refers to the femininity of Eve (under the sign of the moon and the night). However, it is difficult to follow Boeke's conclusion that this detail places the whole landscape under the sign of a lunar world.⁴² In the global context of the painting the moon refers to Judaism and to the representatives of the Old Law, and thus accentuates the duality of the Old Testament God and New Testament Christ [Fig. 15].⁴³ An interpretation of the painting should not excessively stress the importance of a single detail while forgetting to consider a whole series of equally important details, their interrelation and their role in the process of signification. Formal organization, such as the circular format of the landscape tondo, must also be taken into account as a producer of meaning.

Ideas about the circle's perfection occur frequently in Christian thought, and the exegetical tradition of Genesis in particular has largely exploited the circle as a sign of the perfection of the Creation and of the omnivoyant Creator.⁴⁴ Bles's *Paradise*, articulating the narratives of the Creation and the Fall, offers two major Christian applications of the circle's perfection: the first implying the Father as Creator and the second the Son as Re-Creator of the original perfection, formerly lost but now renewed. The expulsion and subsequent return of the creatures God has wrought, is achieved in the story of the Redemption through the Incarnation of Christ, who sanctifies those who have strayed from the First Principle. Bles's painting visualizes this double movement, on the one hand by situating three scenes from Genesis 2

⁴¹ Boeke, *Rondom* 83–158.

⁴² Ibidem 157–158: ‘Herri met de Bles schildert zon en maan in het omringende firmament. Ook plaats hij een maansikkel op de mijter van God en meer nog, zijn hele paradijs maakt de indruk een maanlandschap te zijn. De ronde vorm van zijn paneel suggereert de kosmos en voral de maan’.

⁴³ For further examples of this usage, see ibidem 133–153.

⁴⁴ On divine omnivoyance and the multiple visual devices invented to signify it, see in particular, Gibson W. S., “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror of Man”, *Oud-Holland* 87, 4 (1973) 205–226; Koerner J.-L., *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: 1993) 127–139; Melion W., *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print 1550–1625* [Early Modern Catholicism and the Visual Arts 1] (Philadelphia: 2009) 159. See also, Certeau M. de, “Nicolas de Cues: le secret d'un regard”, *Traverses* 30–31 (1984) 70–85 ; Cues N. de, *Le Tableau ou la vision de Dieu*, ed. A. Minazzoli (Paris: 1986); Ot G., *La vision de Dieu aux multiples formes, quolibet tenu à Paris en décembre 1333*, ed. C. Trottmann (Paris: 2001).



Fig. 15. Albrecht Dürer, *Joachim in the Temple* (1510–1515). Engraving, 29.1 × 21 cm., detail.
The British Museum, AN45701001.

and 3 (the Creation of Eve, the Temptation and the Expulsion) on the same horizontal line: passage from the center of the picture to the right border, corresponds to a movement of removal or ejection. On the other hand, this double movement is achieved by spatially dissociating the scene of warning and by placing in the center of Paradise the soteriological and typological figure of Christ as the New Adam and *Fons vitae* [Fig. 16]. The presence here of several animals with bright white fur – a rabbit, a dear, a unicorn – drinking from the fountain emphasizes the idea of original purity and refers to a passage from Psalm XXXVI often used in the iconographic tradition of Paradise imagery: ‘man and beast you save, O Lord [...] and you give them drink from the river of your delights. For with you is the fountain of life’.⁴⁵ The unicorn is present alongside the Creator in numerous

⁴⁵ Psalm 36:7–10. On the comparison of Christ to the *Fons vitae*, particularly in the context of typological exegesis linking Genesis and the episode of Christ and the



Fig. 16. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of Christ and the fountain.

representations of Paradise, especially in the episode of Eve and Original Sin where it signifies redemption through Christ (identified as the ‘Heavenly Unicorn’ in Christian bestiaries).⁴⁶ It is out of this tradition, as also in the comparison of the *Fons vitae* to the Earthly Paradise and of Christ to the fountain of purity, that Bles visualizes a circular Paradise as the basis for a typological exegesis of Genesis. A tiny detail, Christ’s gesture, completes this central configuration: by replacing the

Samaritan woman, see Lubac H. de, *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l’Écriture*, 2 vols. (Paris: 1961–64) vol. II 4; Alexandre-Bidon D., “De la fontaine de vie au pressoir mystique”, in idem (ed.), *Le pressoir mystique. Actes du colloque de Recloses* (Paris: 1990) 17; Ortega-Tillier, *Le jardin* 197.

⁴⁶ See Caillois R., *Le mythe de la licorne* (Fontfroide-le-Haut: 1991); Pinon L., *Livres de zoologie de la Renaissance, une anthologie (1450–1700)* (Paris: 1995) 31; Ortega-Tillier, *Le jardin* 192.

simple warning finger that appears in Aldegrever's engraving with the benedictory gesture – two fingers corresponding to the sign of salvation and redemption – Bles invites us to reconsider the whole composition from a soteriological and typological perspective.⁴⁷

The Exegetical Animals

Bles's representation of two biblical chapters within an exegetical landscape prompts us carefully to consider the active participation of the animals in the painting. Here again Bles's work stands outside the iconographic norm. There are two broad categories of animals in the representations of Paradise. The first corresponds, for the most part, to chapter 1 and shows the profusion of created animals distributed in couples representing the aquatic, terrestrial and celestial species. This tendency, expressive of the values of abundance, variety and harmony, culminates in the encyclopedic landscapes of Jan Brueghel and Roelandt Savery [Fig. 17], in which traditional deer, bears and horses are depicted alongside the porcupine, the capuchin monkey and the bird of paradise (recently discovered in New Guinea), and wherein the cat and mouse and leopard and lion live together in perfect harmony. The second category generally corresponds to the representations of isolated episodes in chapters 2 and 3, wherein a few specific animals selected for their symbolic value replace a generic fauna. For instance,

⁴⁷ Furthermore, Boeke notes in *Rodom van het paradijsverhaal* 103–104, that Bles has transformed the gesture of God's two fingers in Aldegrever's engraving, into a single finger, and concludes that this was an 'error of interpretation'; the artist was 'too focused on landscape', and therefore 'did not understand the meaning of clothing and gestures of the characters in the Aldegrever prints that he copied' (!): 'Ook Herri met de Bles geeft aan God als schepper van Eva een combinatie van mijter en kroon in navolging van de gravures van Aldegrever, maar bij hem is de bijbelse inhoud niet het centrale motief van het kunstwerk. Hij is geheel op het landschap geconcentreerd, niet op de figuren en zeker niet op de symboliek van hun kleding. Hij kopieert wel de vormen, maar zonder bij de zin ervan werkelijk betrokken te zijn. Hij maakt zelfs een ernstige fout in de actie van God, want in de plaats van het zegenende gebaar met de twee vingers laat hij God het vermanende gebaar met de wijsvinger maken. [...] Aldegrever voegt een nieuw en uiterst symbolisch motief aan de hoofdtooii van de schepper van Eva [...]: een maansikkel als emblem. [...] Herri met de Bles kopieert het, maar zonder nadruk'. Most significant here is the replacement of the warning gesture by the salvific gesture of the Creator Son, whereby Bles confers a soteriological dimension on the picture. Given a choice between the painter's supposed lack of understanding or that of the art historian, I would opt for the latter.



Fig. 17. Roelandt Saverij, *Paradise*, 1625. Oil on wood, 59.3 × 122.4 cm. Private collection.

in Hartmann Schedel's *Liber chronicarum*, Adam, shaped by God from the dust, is associated with a bear, which according to the bestiaries is born formless and licked into being by its mother [Fig. 18].⁴⁸ The bear is thus a metaphor for the power of Faith to shape man. In the representations of the Fall that abounded in the sixteenth century, a small selection of animals that commonly embody falsehood and deception – monkey, cat, fox, and snake – surround the temptress. On the contrary, the deer, lamb, rooster, and lion are allegories of Christ. Respectively, these animals accentuate the diabolical or soteriological connotation of the scene as a whole [Figs. 19 & 20].

Bles's *tondo* proposes a third alternative that combines these two tendencies: his animals express the *copia*, *varietas* and greatness of the Creation, but they also participate in visual exegesis through various effects of proximity, opposition, or association with the divine and human characters. Instead of the encyclopedic variety and harmony of the animal couples, Bles's animals seem to reflect the laws of sympathy and antipathy: one of the four forms of the *episteme of similarity* (alongside *convenencia*, *aemulatio* and *analogia*) which, according to Foucault, dominated sixteenth-century thought. These two notions of sympathy and antipathy are recurrent *lieux communs* in literary texts,

⁴⁸ See Schedel Hartmann, *Liber chronicarum* (Nuremberg, Anton Koberger: 1493), fol. 4v.



Fig. 18. Anonymous, *The Creation of Adam*, woodcut illustration to Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum* (Augsburg, J. Schensperger: 1493). Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

natural histories and the visual arts of that time. Pierre Belon and Ulisse Aldrovandi frequently alluded to them, Conrad Gesner dedicated a whole section of his *Treatise on Zoology* to them and Joseph Boillot published a treaty entirely illustrated with zoomorphic architecture based on the relations of antipathy between animals.⁴⁹ Erasmus,

⁴⁹ Foucault M., *Les mots et les choses* (Paris: 1966) 32–59. On sympathy and antipathy in sixteenth-century thought, see Margolin J.-C., “Sympathie(s) et antipathie(s) à la Renaissance. Figures concrètes du même et de l’autre”, *Le journal de la Renaissance* 5 (2008) 169–191; and, in particular, Smith P., “Sympathy in Eden. On Paradise with the Fall of Man by Rubens and Brueghel”, in Göttler C. – Neuber W. (eds.), *Spirits Unseen. The Representation of Subtle Bodies in Early Modern European Culture*, *Intersections* 9 (2007) 211–244.



Fig. 19. Gerard van Groeningen, *The Fall*. Engraved illustration to *Biblia sacra* (Antwerp, Christopher Plantin: 1583). Bibliothèque Sainte Geneviève, Paris.

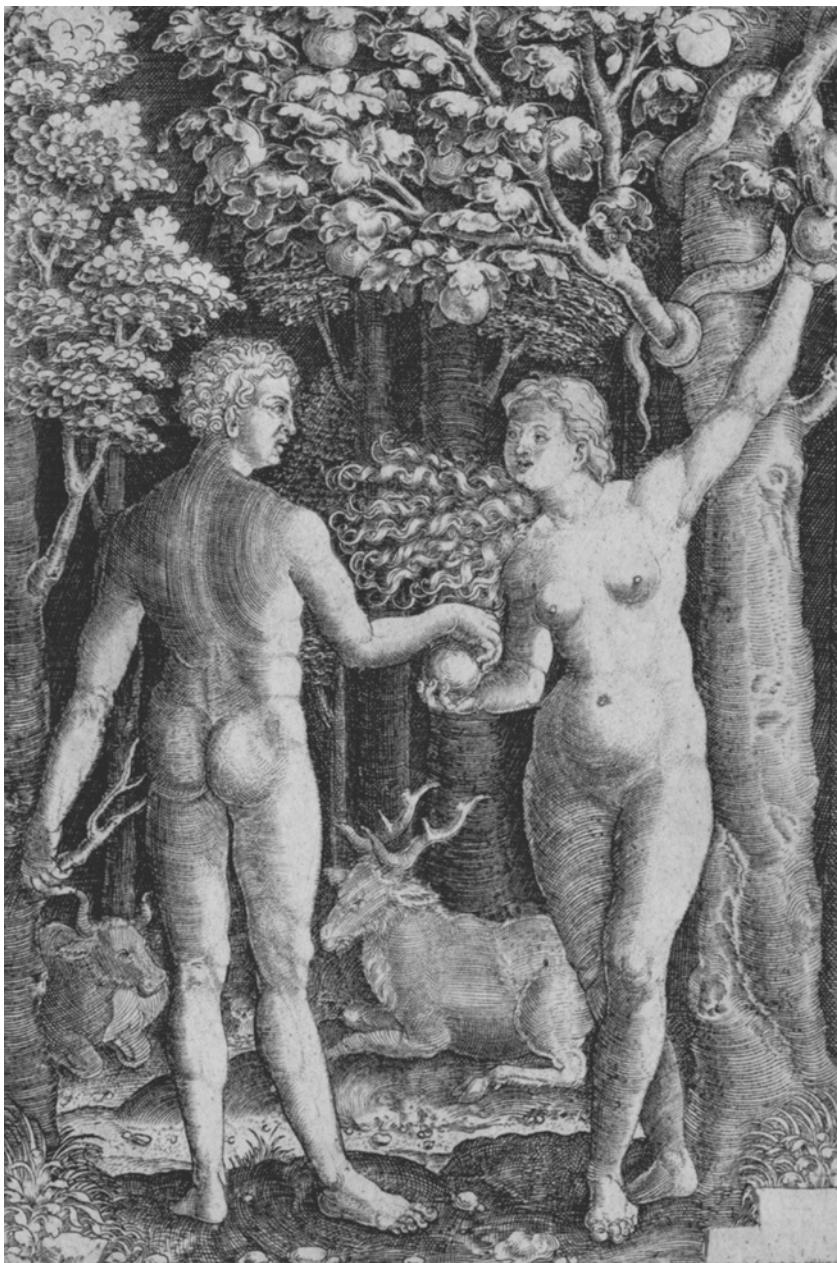


Fig. 20. Hans Brosamer, *The Fall* (ca. 1540). Engraving, 11.6 × 7.8 cm. The British Museum, AN610893001.

whose many texts operate under the sign of analogy,⁵⁰ dedicated one of his *colloquia*, the *Amicitia*, to this phenomenon. In the *Amicitia*, the protagonists, John and Ephorin (in Greek ‘the one who observes’) enumerate no fewer than one hundred examples of animals connected by sympathy or antipathy and ponder the frequency of this law and God’s mysterious nature.⁵¹ Some associations must have had a specific meaning for humanist Christian spectators of the sixteenth century, familiar with the bestiary of Christ and analogical thought. Thus the prominent juxtaposition of a rooster and a deer facing a monkey and a goat is probably not fortuitous [Fig. 21]. The three main qualities of the deer⁵² – presage to the light, enemy of the serpent and vigilant guide to the Christian – are shared by the cock.⁵³ Both animals appear as headers in Christian bestiaries (along with the lion that dominates the foreground). The polarities of the tondo, marked by the passage from light to darkness, justify the elevated position of the cock, whose call is supposed to frighten nocturnal demons and announce the rising (resurrection) of the light of day that triumphs against the darkness. Bles’s painting offers another Christian commonplace, present in many books published or translated in Flanders (such as the *Physiologus*, the *Dialogue of the Creatures* or the *Mirrors of the Creation*), by symmetrically opposing two horned animals, respective embodiments of good and evil: the deer and the billy goat. Moreover, the ape, another diabolical creature, is often associated with the latter.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ See Margolin J-C., “L’analogie dans la pensée d’Érasme”, *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* 69 (1978) 24–50.

⁵¹ Erasmus, “*Amicitia* (1531) – Sympathies”, Wolf E. (ed.), *Érasme, Colloques*, 2 vols. (Paris: 1992) vol. II 348–363.

⁵² The deer appears in many of Bles’s landscapes, drinking from a source close to Christ, John the Baptist, the Good Samaritan or St Jerome in Penitence, with whom it embodies the desire for union with God or the Christian soul slaking his thirst at the source of the gospel. On the deer in Christian art and literature, see Charbonneau-Lassay L., *Le bestiaire du Christ* (Milan: 1941 – Paris: 2006) 241–257; Marino Ferro X.R., *Symboles animaux. Un dictionnaire des représentations et croyances en Occident*, (Paris: 1996) 265ff.; Ortega-Tillier V., *Le Jardin d’Eden. Iconographie et topographie dans la gravure (XV^e–XVIII^e siècles)* (Dijon: 2006) 188–190.

⁵³ On the rooster as an emblem of Christ, see Charbonneau-Lassay, *Le bestiaire du Christ* 628–641.

⁵⁴ In Altdorfer’s woodcut illustrating the Lübeck Bible (Lübeck, Ludwig Dietz: 1533), the serpent is replaced by an ape eating the forbidden fruit, while Eve looks on. On apes or *diaboli*, as models of false imitation associated with original sin and the Devil, see Janson H., *Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (London: 1952); Weemans M., *Le paysage extravagant. Herri met de Bles, Le mercier endormi pillé par les singes* (Paris: 2009).

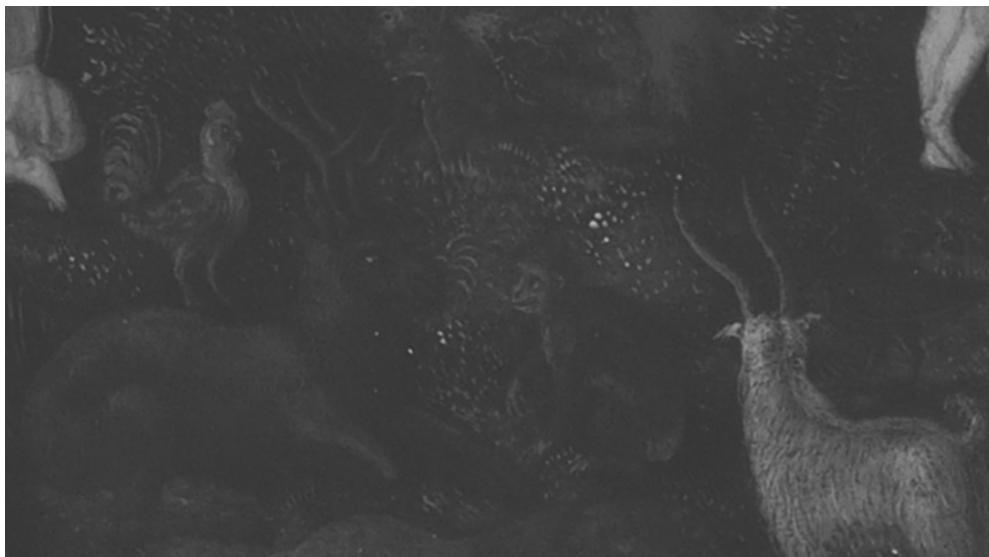


Fig. 21. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of rooster, deer, and monkey.

One pair of animals is assembled according to the principle of species [Fig. 22]. But here again, Bles departs from the iconographic standard by showing two copulating animals at the foot of the Tree of Knowledge. Symmetrical counterparts to Adam and Eve on the right side of the trunk, they establish the narrative link between the scene of the first parents tasting the forbidden fruit and the Expulsion. Sixteenth-century scholars repeatedly commented on the connection between sin and sexuality, established by Augustine in his commentary on Genesis. Like Luther, they distinguished holy procreation that existed in Paradise before the *felix culpa*, from procreation after the Fall and its degeneration into *lepra libidinis* or bestial concupiscence. When the texts are explicit, images usually employ metonymy by proximity and analogy,⁵⁵ with the tree branch or serpent suggesting male genitalia and the apple evoking Eve's breast. Rare are the images that directly represent the sexual dimension, as does Bles with the animals copu-

⁵⁵ On direct or metonymic representations of sexuality associated with the Fall in sixteenth-century texts and images, see Wajeman, *La parole d'Adam* 96–97; and also Charpentier F. “La guerre des andouilles”, in *Études seiziémistes offertes à Monsieur le Professeur V.L. Saulnier* (Geneva:1980) 119–135.



Fig. 22. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of copulating animals.

lating beside the scene of temptation.⁵⁶ An additional animal scene intended to attract our attention is ostensibly situated in the foreground of the painting, in the immediate vicinity of the moon painted beside the border, close to the scene of the Expulsion, and at the tip of an axis corresponding to the passage of light into darkness. Among the animal scenes, this is undoubtedly the most incongruous (in the sense that it would not normally have a place in this garden of concord and harmony), because it depicts animals quarreling [Fig. 23].⁵⁷ The

⁵⁶ Among the rare examples of images explicitly identifying original sin with the sexual act, are a painting by Jan Gossaert and a drawing by Hans Baldung Grien; on this topic, see Noonan J.T., *Contraception: A History of Its Treatment by Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (Harvard: 1966); Bark S., *Auf der Suche nach dem verloren Paradies. Das Thema des Sündenfalles in der altdeutschen Kunst* (1495–1545) (Francfort: 1994).

⁵⁷ Another rare example of animals quarreling appears in Jost Amman's *Paradise* engraving (1579). The presence in the left foreground of the serpent and several aggressive animals (a lion, deer, bull, cheetah and bear) signals the loss of paradisiacal harmony, to be traced in the eight episodes leading from the Creation to the Fall. On this engraving, see Schmidt P., *Die Illustration der Lutherbibel, 1522–1700. Ein Stück abendländische Kultur und Kirchengeschichte mit Verzeinissen den Bibeln, Bilder und*



Fig. 23. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of dog and pig.

discordant note sounded within Paradise by the fight between a dog and a pig abates somewhat if one considers the exegetical tradition attaching to the book of Genesis, and specifically the typological relationship between Genesis and the Gospel of Matthew, that Bles's painting seems to visualize. This parallel was first drawn by Origen who constantly emphasized the antagonism between the carnal and the spiritual in his influential exegesis of Genesis. His account culminates in a discussion of the sentence pronounced by God on Adam and Eve: 'And God said, see, I have given you every plant producing seed, on the face of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit producing seed: they will be for your food' (*Genesis* 1:29). Allegorically, explains Origen, the fruits of

Künstler (Basel: 1962) 219. On a similar case in Jan Brueghel and Peter Paul Rubens's *Paradise*, see Smith, "Sympathy in Eden" 226.

the earth given as food to man can be interpreted as an invitation to turn towards the Creator, to render unto him with dignity that which He has given, rather than distorting these fruits with lust, anger and rampant desire, as did Cain. Thus, concludes Origen, ‘do not give that which is holy to the dogs or to the pigs’ (*Mattheus* 7:6).⁵⁸

Finally we must attend to the foreground lion that occupies a prominent place within this zoological configuration [Fig. 24]. The juxtaposition of the strongest animal and the weakest (here a rabbit) is a common device in Paradise images, signifying harmony and heavenly concord. The lion’s central and conspicuous position at the forefront of Bles’s *Earthly Paradise* is striking. The lion’s position suggests a parallel with the inaugural role granted in most Christian bestiaries to the ‘king of the beasts’, the exemplary animal that aids in ‘understanding the Holy Scriptures’.⁵⁹ This applies not only to the lion but also to animals or *res* in general: it is by referring to the Bible on the one hand, and by observing the animals’ physical characteristics on the other, that authors and Christian artists elaborated on Scripture allegorically and morally.

It is by reference to the books of the Prophets (who describe the Lion of Judah) and the Apocalypse of John and to the natural features of the animal, be they real or fictitious, that the lion became the soteriological and eschatological symbol of Christ.⁶⁰ The ‘important thing’, says St. Augustine, ‘is to consider the meaning of a fact and not to discuss its authenticity’.⁶¹ For instance, it was believed that the lion cub was born dead and then brought to life by the breath of his father three days later, a story that justified using the lion as an emblem of the death and resurrection of Christ.⁶² Additionally, folklore claimed that the lion slept with its eyes open, making him an apt symbol of Christ’s vigilance. The lion’s ability to conceal itself (erasing its tracks with its tail) also inspired the comparison with Christ who ‘conceals

⁵⁸ See Origen, *Écritures, océan de mystères* 46.

⁵⁹ On the lion as emblem of the Divine Word, see Charbonneau-Lassay, *Le bestiaire* 46–47.

⁶⁰ On the lion as emblem of Christ, see Marino Ferro, *Symboles animaux* 205; Charbonneau-Lassay, *Le bestiaire* 35–53; Ortega-Tillier, *Le Jardin* 190–192.

⁶¹ Cited in Charbonneau-Lassay, *Le bestiaire* 41; the quote comes from Augustine’s commentary on Psalm CII, in which he describes the strange qualities of animals such as the eagle.

⁶² Hence his frequent presence alongside Adam invigorated by the divine breath, as is a cub by its mother, and in scenes of the Fall, where like the deer he alludes to Christ the Redeemer.



Fig. 24. Herri met de Bles, *Earthly Paradise*, detail of lion and rabbit.

from human intelligences traces of his divine nature'. A final parallel claimed that the strength of the lion's roar made him a symbol for the power of speech and the dissemination of the divine Word.⁶³ One might think then that the prominence of the lion and its proximity to the deer, far from being coincidental, reflect the painter's knowledge and interpretation of the Christological and soteriological tradition of animal allegories, transmitted in Christian iconography and bestiaries.

The animals of Bles's *Earthly Paradise* combine, as we have seen, various levels of meaning: the *copia varietatis* of aquatic, terrestrial and celestial species expresses the greatness of Creation, the relations of sympathy and antipathy organized according to the Christian bestiary

⁶³ 'That's why', says Andrea Alciati, 'it is placed before the temple door', and in the sixteenth century, Charles Borromeo recommended that church doors be adorned with the figure of a lion; see Charbonneau-Lassay, *Le bestiaire* 42.

foreshadow the postlapsarian condition of humanity, the purity of animals associated with Christ and the *Fons Vitae* are opposed to the impurity of outlying animals linked to the scenes of the Fall and Expulsion, and the copulating or aggressive animals announce the *lepra libidinis* and prefigure original sin. The conception of Creation as a vast *allegoria in factis*⁶⁴ is bound by Christian authors to the equally crucial principle that the interpretation of 'res' does not refer to a fixed meaning but is based on context: 'When we hear about realities in the Holy Scriptures, we must look carefully for the properties and the characteristics that these things naturally possess, and then we can know clearly how we must understand, whether in good part, whether in bad part, according to the narrative context'.⁶⁵ The various levels of meaning (rather than any irreducibility to a fixed meaning) and the specific relationships that bind the animals and the sacred protagonists, are pictorial features that invite the viewer to an active exegesis of the landscape. Finally, and this applies to the whole image, the viewer must attend not only to the exegetical use of each single detail, but to the accumulation of details (the fountain and the plowed field, the animals, the Father Creator and Christ the Re-Creator) that require close and synthetic perception and involve pictorial devices such as analogy and polarity, typology, allusions to the first two chapters of Genesis and instances of 'holy cunning'.

Visio Dei and Hermeneutical Crisis

My analysis above focused on the soteriological dimension of Bles's painting as a confirmation of the traditional exegesis linking the first three chapters of *Genesis*. I now wish to address (in the context of a *visual exegesis*) how this synthetic dimension must also be explained by a theme that unifies the first books of *Genesis* (and of which they are the founding story): *visio Dei*. Exegesis of *Genesis* traditionally emphasized the fundamental place of vision and its structuring

⁶⁴ On the distinction made by medieval theologians between *allegoria in factis* and *allegoria in verbis*, see Strubel A., "‘Allegoria in factis’ et ‘allegoria in verbis’", *Poétique* 25 (1975) 342–357.

⁶⁵ Garnier de Langres, *Allegoriae in universam sacram Scripturae*, as quoted in Dahan G., *L'exégèse chrétienne de la Bible en Occident médiéval, XII^o–XIV^o siècles* (Paris: 1999) 335.

role within the narrative. It appears in the opening verses of *Genesis* Book 1 with the creation of light – a condition of vision – and continues with God's divine gaze focusing on His creation, highlighted by the repeated use of the verb 'to see', which punctuates every stage of creation, each stage concluding with the same sentence: 'And God saw that it was good'. Vision therefore plays a major role in Book 1 and is defined by its positive connotation, its association with the divine goodness, the greatness and power of an omnivoyant Creator contemplating his Creation in its entirety with a craftsman's eye to detail.⁶⁶ Vision is also central in Book 3 of *Genesis*, but here the vision of man replaces the vision of God and in contrast with latter takes a markedly negative turn. Ominously, the first mention of vision here comes from the serpent: 'For God sees that on the day when you take of its fruit, *your eyes will be open*, and you will be as gods, having knowledge of good and evil' (*Genesis* 3:5). Exegetes noted the significant emphasis placed on vision in the following verses and concluded that it is the act of vision that causes original sin: 'And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes [...] she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat' (Gen. 3, 6). In contrast to the positive construal of vision in Book 1, the vision of Adam and Eve in Book 3, under the manipulative influence of the serpent, becomes the instrument of the Fall. All commentators since Origen granted the greatest importance to this passage and to the interpretation of the first consequence of original sin: as soon as they ate the forbidden fruit, says the text, 'the eyes of both were opened' (*Genesis* 3:7: 'Et aperti sunt oculi amborum'). It is a paradoxical sentence: for how can we understand their eyes to have been opened, when the text also says that they were enjoying what there was to be seen? The dominant interpretation has been that the first parents were not physically blind, when their eyes were opened. In other words, we must understand that they were seeing with the eyes of the flesh, while their spiritual

⁶⁶ On the role of vision in the Old Testament and in *Genesis*, see in particular, O' Kane M., *Painting the Text. The Artist as Biblical Interpreter* (Sheffield: 2007) 1–33. Alter R., *Genesis. Translation and Commentary* (New York – London: 1996); Whybray R.N., "Genesis", in Barton J. – Muddiman J. (eds.), *The Oxford Bible Commentary* (Oxford: 2001) 38–66; Balentine S.E., *The Hidden God: The Hiding of the Face of God in the Old Testament* (Oxford: 1983); Carroll R.P., "Blindsight and the Vision: Blindness and Insight in the Book of Isaiah", in Broyles C. – Evans C.A. (eds.), *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah*, 2 vols. (Leiden: 1997) I 79–93; Sherry P., *Spirit and Beauty* (London: 2002).

eyes were now closed. The eyes that opened, explains Origen, were the eyes of the carnal gaze, as opposed to the spiritual eyes that were once capable of seeing God but 'began to see badly and, as a result of Original Sin, then lost sight'.⁶⁷ Luther interpreted this as follows: '[...] your eyes will be opened: that is to say that they became blind. Before their eyes were closed, but after the *Fall* they were opened'.⁶⁸ Interpreting the Fall as the blinding of humanity as a result of the blurring of spiritual sight, appears long before Luther and among different religious communities. Most scholars of the sixteenth century, whether Catholic or Protestant, developed a similar interpretation by asserting that sin takes us into darkness, into blindness. The narrative of vision in the early books of Genesis is the starting point of a schema repeated by all the biblical stories about vision: blindness (in its physical, cognitive or mental meaning) goes hand in hand with the question of vision; whenever there is a question of appearance, revelation or spiritual insight, the impossibility, inability or refusal to see follows as a complementary theme. What constitutes the story of Genesis then, is the Christian conception of vision ordered to a double logic of sacrifice and conversion. This summarizes the paradoxical problem that equates carnal gaze to spiritual blindness on the one hand and, on the other, carnal blindness to spiritual insight.⁶⁹ This law of chiasmus provides the interpretative key to the countless visual narratives in the Bible that constantly duplicate vision in its two inseparable extremes, as two sides of the same coin. The passage from vision's positive meaning in Book 1 to its negative meaning in Book 3 delimits the *visio Dei*, an expression that must be understood in its dual meaning: the subjective genitive and objective genitive implicitly oppose the omnivoyant God to blind humanity after the Fall. This division also implies a progression, a recovery leading by successive steps from the original

⁶⁷ Cf. Origenes, *Les Écritures* 65.

⁶⁸ Luther M., *Oeuvres. Tome XVII. Commentaire du livre de la Genèse*, ed. R.-H. Esnault (Geneva: 1977) 144–154.

⁶⁹ On the Christian conception of vision and blindness, see in particular, Derrida J., *Mémoires d'aveugles* (Paris: 1992). On the *Visio Dei*, see Kirk K., *The Vision of God: The Christian Doctrine of "Summum Bonum"* [The Bampton Lectures for 1928] (London: 1932); Miles M., "Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Saint-Augustine's *De Trinitate* and *Confessions*", *The Journal of Religions* 63 (1983) 125–142; Teske R., "St Augustine and the vision of God", in Fleteren F. van (ed.), *Augustine* (New York: 1994) ; Hamburger J., "The Visual and the Visionary: The Image in Late Medieval Monastic Devotion", *Viator* 20 (1989) 161–182; Boulnois O., *Au-delà de l'image. Une archéologie du visuel au Moyen Âge V^e–XVI^e siècle* (Paris: 2008).

lost vision to the *Parousia*, the heart of which is the essence of Christ's mission to heal the blindness of fallen humanity. *De Visu*, Adriaen Collaert's engraving after Maerten de Vos, offers an explicit image of this progression [Fig. 25]: the central allegorical personification of vision, a woman looking into a convex mirror, accompanied by the eagle, an attribute of visual acuity,⁷⁰ is framed on the left by the Old Testament scene of God's warning to Adam and Eve (*Genesis* 2:16–17), and on the right by the gospel episode of Christ healing the blind.⁷¹ Several details complete the typological and soteriological correspondence in a more or less indirect way, such as Eve's act of designating (while also covering) her 'dappled' breast (anticipating the next scene where she will offer Adam the forbidden fruit), or the presence of a deer between God and the first couple, which foreshadows the mediating and redeeming mission of Christ [Fig. 26].

Original Sin blurs vision. But the confusion introduced by the snake at the climactic moment also blurs language.⁷² 'For God sees that on the day when you take of its fruit, your eyes will be open, and you will be as gods, having knowledge of good and evil' (*Genesis* 3:5). Exegetes also noted a second crucial point of this decisive sentence: the association of vision with knowledge. Blurred vision is also a confusion of knowledge, and Christian authors exploited the parallel between the passage from heavenly vision to carnal blindness, and the passage from Adam's language to a disordering of knowledge. The theme of the Adamic language continued to fuel speculation in the sixteenth century. It was assumed that the first man shared the same ontological language with his Creator, wherein words coincided with things.⁷³ The Fall, having troubled transparency, resulted in the human inability to read the First Book of Nature, and this resulted in God's creation of

⁷⁰ Because of its qualities of elevation and discerning vision, the bird is traditionally equated with the divine, and especially Christ. It is also signifies John the visionary of Patmos and author of the 'gospel of light'.

⁷¹ *De Visu*, Maerten de Vos, after Adrian Collaert, engraving, 21.5 × 26.6 cm, 1575.

⁷² See Wajeman, *La parole d'Adam* 197–249.

⁷³ There is an abundant literature on the interrelated myths of Adamic language and the Tower of Babel; see in particular, Dubois C.-G., *Mythe et langage au seizième siècle* (Bordeaux:1970); Fraser R., *The Language of Adam. On the Limits and System of Discourse* (New York:1977); Céard J., "De Babel à la Pentecôte: la transformation du mythe de la confusion des langues au XVI^e siècle", *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et de Renaissance* 42 (1980) 577–594; Simonelli P., *La lingua di Adamo* (Florence: 1984); Wajeman, *La parole d'Adam* 152–155.



Fig. 25. Adriaen Collaert after Maerten de Vos, *Visus* (1575). Engraving, 21.5 × 26.6 cm.
Private collection.

the Second Book, the Book of Scriptures. But, and this is the second key issue raised by scriptural revelation, the Scriptures are themselves not transparent, and therefore, the labour that Man was compelled to take up after the Fall also includes the work of biblical interpretation. This is why the Bible is full of obscurities, all of which have been ‘disposed of by Divine Plan to tame pride through effort and to save intelligence from the tedium of facile investigations, which generally have no reward’.⁷⁴ These are Augustine and Origen’s arguments, repeated in the sixteenth century by Erasmus among others.⁷⁵ If the

⁷⁴ Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana* in Migne J.-P. (ed.), *Patrologia Latina XXXIV* (Paris: 1841), Bk. II, chap. 6, cols. 7, 142–143: ‘Quod totum provisum esse divinitus non dubito ad edomandam labore superbiam et intellectum a fastidio reuocandum, cui facile investigata plerumque uilescunt’.

⁷⁵ See in particular his *Ratio sive Methodus verae theologiae*, in Holborn H. (ed.), *Erasmus' Ausgewählte Werke* (Munich: 1933) 259. On this point and on the influence



Fig. 26. Adriaen Collaert after Maerten de Vos, *Visus*, detail.

obscurities of the texts illuminate the extent to which Man is incapable of conceiving Divine Truth, they also have the effect and function of encouraging Man to uncover Truth.⁷⁶ While making the world unintelligible, the Fall also opened the door to interpretation: hermeneutics and exegesis are born with original sin. What original loss makes clear, what it reveals, is a hermeneutic crisis and the necessity of inter-

of Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* and Origen's *Philocalia* on Erasmus, see Béné C., *Érasme et saint Augustin ou influence de saint Augustin sur l'humanisme d'Érasme* (Genève: 1969); Godin, *Érasme lecteur d'Origène*; Cave T., *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford: 1985).

⁷⁶ By blinding Man, sin also gave him access to knowledge. The ambivalence of sixteenth-century authors is summed up in the idea of *felix culpa*: without original sin, the scriptural revelation and the coming of Christ could not have happened.

preclusive labour, since this loss opens ‘the abyss [...] between desire and its elusive object’.⁷⁷ In Jean Bodin’s *Colloquium Heptalomeres*, to Senamus the sceptic who claims that obscurity is detrimental to the understanding of Scripture, Salomon answers by explaining the desirability of difficult and forbidden things: ‘We are always attracted by what is prohibited, and we never want anything more ardently than what is forbidden or removed from us’.⁷⁸ (‘Nous portons tousjours a ce qui nous est deffendu et nous ne desirons jamais rien avec plus d’ardeur que ce que l’on nous veut oster ou que l’on nous deffend.’) If the sixteenth century showed a particular interest in the story of the Fall, it is because this episode poses a topical question for authors and artist-exegetes confronted with the task of reflecting on the biblical text and interpreting it. The appearance of editions and translations accentuated the challenge of interpretation in a context of religious dissension and hermeneutic crisis.⁷⁹

The tondo format of Bles’s *Earthly Paradise* evokes an eye or a mirror, or rather as two categories of mirrors.⁸⁰ During the Renaissance, round convex mirrors embodied the ideal of totalizing vision and for this reason became an emblem of divine omnivoyance. But there is a second class of mirror, and associated with it, a second conception of vision: it is the round material object, speckled with oxidation spots, that reflects darkly and imperfectly.⁸¹ This other mirror is implicated in the famous Pauline definition of human vision ‘in mirror and enigma’, blurred with the Fall and awaiting to be renewed in the eschatological expectation of a face-to-face encounter with God.

⁷⁷ Agamben G., *Stanze* (Paris: 1994) 27.

⁷⁸ Bodin J., *Colloquium Heptalomeres* (1587), in Berriot F. (ed.), *Colloque entre sept scavans qui sont de differents sentimens* (Geneva: 1984).

⁷⁹ On the Fall as the origin of confusion and loss of transparency, and on the interrogation on the intransitivity of sign in 16th century, see Demonet M.-L., *Les Voix du signe* (Paris: 1992); Jeanneret M., *Perpetuum mobile* (Paris: 1997); Cave T., *Pré-historiens. Textes troublés au seuil de la modernité*, 2 vols. (Geneva: 2000).

⁸⁰ One of the most famous circular paintings associated with the divine eye is Hieronymus Bosch’s tondo of the *Seven Deadly Sins*, articulating humanity’s blindness to divine omnivoyance. On the comparison of Bosch’s tondo with an eye and a mirror, see in particular, Gibson W.S., “Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror of Man”, *Oud-Holland* 87 (1973) 205–226; Pinson Y., “Hieronymus Bosch- Homo Viator at a Crossroads: A New Reading of the Rotterdam Tondo”, *Artibus et Historiae* 52 (2005) 57–84.

⁸¹ On the significance of the mirror during the Renaissance, see in particular, Minazzoli A., *La première ombre. Réflexion sur le miroir et la pensée* (Paris: 1990); Pomel F. (ed.), *Miroirs et jeux de miroirs dans la littérature médiévale* (Rennes: 2003).

Characterized by a typological and encyclopedic logic, the *speculum* literary tradition (with its multiple variants: *speculum mundi*, *naturale speculum*, *speculum historiale*, *speculum humanae salvationis*) originates in this dual conception of the mirror, as also does Bles's mirror or eye-landscape. With its abundance of meticulous details inviting close viewing and allegorical interpretation, Bles's Paradise represents not only divine omnivoyance, but also, perhaps even more, the imperfect vision described by St. Paul. If the figure of the omnivoyant God contemplating His Creation from afar in Master MS's engraving has disappeared from Bles's tondo, it is in order to invite us to meditate on our own distant gaze, quasi-divine in its combination of immensity and minuteness, but imperfect, incapable of grasping Divine Truth, except by the slow and painstaking work of exegesis – through detours and enigmas.

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REPRESENTATIONS OF ADAM AND EVE IN
LATE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
ENGLISH EMBROIDERY*

Andrew Morrall

English domestic embroidery underwent an extraordinary flowering in the late sixteenth- and seventeenth centuries. In terms of the quantity and range of object types created, the number of techniques employed, and the social range of both consumers and producers, both the embroideries and the upholstered furnishings they decorated reflect an important change in attitude towards domestic comfort. This change was made possible under the conditions of stable rule established by the Tudors and which continued, in the early seventeenth century, under the Stuarts. Transforming the otherwise plain wooden structures of contemporary furniture, embroideries were markers of the growing prosperity of the landed and professional classes, of newly found domestic values, of taste, and of social prestige. Embroidery was a form of decoration that literally underpinned social life, bringing adornment to clothing and comfort into the home in a manner that was central to the aesthetic environment in which people lived.

Much of the embroidery produced was pictorial, and until the later seventeenth century, the most popular single source of subject matter was the Bible. Biblical images – the great majority drawn from the Old Testament – were applied to a whole range of embroidered household furnishings that included valences, cushion covers, table carpets, the surfaces of caskets, book covers, and even items of clothing. From about 1630 onwards, a fashion arose for embroidered biblical pictures made apparently with no specific practical function in mind. As such, embroidered decoration spoke to more than material comfort and

* Much of the content of this article, adapted and extended for the present context, appeared as part of an essay “Regaining Eden: Representations of Nature in Seventeenth-Century English Embroidery”, in Morrall A. – Watt M. (eds.), *English Embroidery from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1580–1700. Twixt Art and Nature* (New Haven – London: 2008) 79–98. I am grateful to Yale University Press for permission to use the material therein for the current article.

social prestige. The medium was deeply imbued with the values of Protestant education and morality that centred around notions of the well-ordered household.

Many of the embroideries of this period were made by non-professionals, mostly female householders and their daughters, for whom embroidery – of biblical subjects in particular – formed a principal part of their education. Contemporary moralists, in texts that strictly defined women's roles, made embroidery chief among activities considered suitable in the upbringing and education of young girls and in the running of a well-tempered household. The activity of embroidery was considered 'good work' and an active sign of female virtue; it kept women in the home, away from idle pursuits and focused them on pious devotions.¹ Embroidered images of biblical heroines – of Susanna, Abigail, Hester and so forth – served as models in the education of young girls. Their virtuous example was literally inured into their being through the act of making; once completed and put to use these exempla formed part of the habitus of the pious household in which embroidery and religious devotion were integral and related parts of a daily routine.

Due to the amateur status of their makers and the intimate manner of their making, embroideries have the potential to reveal a peculiarly personal form of response to the Bible. Although usually derived from print sources or from ready-made patterns that were drawn by professional men and women working in the textile trades, the often unique character of the imagery is nonetheless striking. It is by individual divagations from iconographic norms that one can measure the nature of personal response to the Bible and of its significances to the individual. One of the purposes of this essay is to show how the content and character of many of the embroideries reveal the general influence of over a century of Protestant religious teaching, mediated broadly across the culture by English vernacular Bibles. Such mediation occurred through hearing the Bible read aloud in church, through participation in a culture of personal reading, and through conventional religious education. Such practices lie at the heart of English

¹ See for instance, Vives Juan Luis, *Institutione feminae christiana: liber primus*, 1524, ed. C. Fantazzi – trans. C. Matheeussen (New York – Cologne: 1996); reprinted as idem, *The Education of a Christian Woman* (1524), ed. – trans. C. Fantazzi (Chicago: 2000). See also Geuter R., "Embroidered Biblical Narratives and their Social Contexts", in *English Embroidery* 57–78; and in the same volume, "Biblical Subjects" 225–256.

seventeenth-century Protestant cultural and social life and find direct expression in many of these domestic amateur embroideries. To the extent that the nature of the embroidery medium is functional and quotidian, it can reveal with perhaps greater clarity than other domains of culture the ways in which the Bible permeated social life in seventeenth-century England.

A further general point to be made is the importance of the decorative idiom particular to the embroidery medium in which the Bible stories are cast. It is an idiom dominated by floral decoration. Indeed, it is difficult to find a piece of embroidered work of this period into which flower and plant forms have not been worked. When contemporaries thought about embroidery, the most abiding metaphor they associated with it was a 'garment of flowers'. Thus the herbalist John Gerard, proclaiming the beauty of natural flowers, delighted in 'the earth appareled with plants, as with a robe of imbroidered worke'.² When the writer John Batchiler praised the embroidering skills of Susanna Perwich, a young woman who had died in 1661, in a posthumous encomium, he saw such realism in her stitched rendering of 'the goodly *Tulip*, *Daffadilly*' and the 'many more varieties, Of natures chiefest rarities' that he presumed a contest between the embroideress's art and Nature herself:

All this so rarely to the Life,/br/>As if there were a kind of strife,/br/>'Twixt Art and Nature³

This kind of *paragone* bespeaks a close conceptual relation between the manner of perceiving embroidered flowers and those of nature, such that many of the meanings contemporaries invested in the natural world also colored the treatment of the floral motifs with which they covered their domestic furnishings, clothing, and accessories. Prevailing attitudes were complex and diverse. Contemporaries could regard flowers in an entirely secular light for purely aesthetic enjoyment or as metaphors of love. But they also shared a view of Nature deeply informed by theology, specifically by a Protestant understanding of Nature as God's creation and of its role in the unfolding of

² Gerard John, *Herball or General Historie of Plantes* (London, Bonham – John Norton: 1597), Dedicatory Epistle 1.

³ Batchiler John, *The Virgin's Pattern in the Exemplary Life and a Lamented Death of Susanna Perwich [...]* (London, Simon Dover: 1661) fol. E2, 55.

Providence. The ontological status of flowers was also based in part on the persistence of the long medieval tradition of religious flower symbolism which, drawing on the language of the Bible, particularly the Psalms and the Song of Songs, associated flowers with Christian concepts and doctrines and with the specific virtues of deities and saints. Thus, the flowers of the field referred to the brevity of human existence, the enclosed garden to virginity, the lily, to the Virgin's purity, the lily among thorns to hidden virtues, the rose and the vine to Christ's blood and Passion, and so on. The important point is that the floral decoration of the Protestant seventeenth century, emerging from its origins in traditional religious art, maintained within itself a continuity of religious affect, even when it was divested of specific symbolism. This in turn allowed floral decoration to function as a vehicle for a particular kind of spiritual ideality, even in contexts that were – in the modern sense – not specifically religious.

A quasi-religious, affective attitude toward flowers coalesces in many aspects of seventeenth-century culture, in which, as Christopher Hill has demonstrated, 'the Bible was central to all intellectual and moral life'.⁴ It is evident in the transcendental poetry of divines like Thomas Traherne (1637–1674) and Henry Vaughan (1622–1695), and in the words of George Herbert (1593–1633), who saw in flowers a metaphor of human life and of individual spiritual awareness:

These are thy wonders, Lord of love,
To make us see we are but flowers that glide;
Which when we once can find and prove,
Thou hast a garden for us, where to bide.⁵

The same substrate of theological understanding is also clearly present in the writings of naturalists and horticulturalists and in the rare glimpses of their readers' reactions where the natural world and a sense of the divine are never far apart. As the title of John Parkinson's popular horticultural treatise and practical guide, *Paradisi in*

⁴ Hill C., *The English Bible and the Seventeenth-Century Revolution* (London: 1994) 20.

⁵ Herbert George, *The Flower*, ll. 43–49, in Palmer G.H. (ed.), *The English Works of George Herbert*, 3 vols. (Boston: 1915) vol. III, 307. For naturalists, see for instance, Austen Ralph, *The Spirituall Use of an Orchard; or Garden of Fruit-Trees* (Oxford, Thomas Robinson: 1653), or Gilbert Samuel, *The florist's vade mecum* (London, Thomas Simmons: 1682), where practical garden advice is interspersed with spiritual meditation.

sole paradisus terrestis (1629) implies, the cultivation of plants could lead to a reclaiming of paradise on earth. His arguments are religious and ethical. From flowers, he avers, ‘We may draw matter at all times [...] to magnifie the Creator that hath given them such diuersities of formes, sentes and colours’. Flowers also serve as a moral analogue for human life: ‘That as many herbes and flowers with their fragrant sweete smels doe comfort, and as it were reuiue the spirits, and perfume a whole house; euen so much men as liue virtuously, labouring to doe good and profit the Church and the Common wealth by their paines or penne, doe as it were send forth a pleasing sauour of sweet instructions’.⁶

Parkinson’s frontispiece carries out the title’s metaphor by showing Adam and Eve tending their paradise garden of exotic and over-size plants, acting as models for contemporary gardeners, and making explicit the idea of gardening as spiritual exercise. In a surviving copy in the Bodleian Library, Oxford [fig. 1], an early owner, Simon Manningham, transcribed onto the frontispiece verse five of *Psalm 148*, the hymn to creation: ‘Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created,’ as well as verses from John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (IV, lines 623–27), in which Adam tells Eve of their duty to God to dress and keep the Garden:

To-morrow ere fresh morning streak the east
 With first approach of light, we must be ris’n,
 And at our pleasant labor, to reform
 Yon flow’ry arbors, yonder alleys green
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown.⁷

In these inscriptions we clearly see the individual sensibility of a reader for whom practical gardening is infused with a poetic and spiritual apprehension of Eden, making of it an act of celebration of God’s creation. As will be explored below, the sense of goodness and innocence that the natural world could embody, and its powerful humanizing effect on the beholder, such that, in Parkinson’s words ‘he is not

⁶ Parkinson John, *Paradisi in sole paradisus terrestis* (London: 1629), Epistle to the Reader, fol. **3v.

⁷ See Bennett J. – Mandelbrote S., *The Garden, the Ark, the Tower, the Temple. Biblical metaphors of knowledge in early modern Europe* (Oxford: 1998) 62–64, fig. 12. Also Prest J., *The Garden of Eden: The Botanic Garden and the Re-Creation of Paradise* (New Haven: 1989).



Fig. 1. Frontispiece to John Parkinson, *Paradisi in sole paradisus terrestris* (London: 1656). University of Oxford, Bodleian Library (Douce P. Subt. 42).

humane, that is not allured with this object',⁸ is powerfully present in the idealizing beauty of embroidered floral decoration of the seventeenth century. It is important therefore to bear in mind how this numinous sense of the natural formed a framework and backdrop to the embroidered scenes, biblical and profane, within the home. In the following an attempt is made to trace how this conception of nature influenced the themes and treatment of embroidered work in explicitly religious subject matter – the Garden of Eden – in order to show how they thus enlivened the domestic interior with an aesthetic beauty that was instinct with spiritual affect and poetic meaning.

Ideal Nature: The Return to Paradise.

A beautiful embroidered panel of a multi-fruited tree [Fig. 2] demonstrates the continuation of a religious idea within a domestic context. The design is decoratively conceived in that the plenitude of flowers and animal forms are spread evenly across the surface. It contains no narrative or overtly symbolic content, yet it is also unmistakably the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden. Its many fruits, as well as the vine curling around its trunk, would have summoned up the description in the Book of *Revelations* (22:1–2): ‘And [the angel] shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal [...] and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner* of fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month’. A potent biblical image, that carried within it God’s redemptive promise (‘to him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life’, *Revelations* 2:7) is thus enmeshed within a decorative scheme whose beauty of color and arrangement and charm and simplicity of representation overlie the theological idea with a mood of joyful affect.

Understood purely in its secular aspect, such a vivid depiction of many different fruits grafted impossibly onto a single tree might have resonated with the contemporary interest and experimentation in the grafting of fruit trees.⁹ Yet this process of inserting a shoot of one plant

⁸ Parkinson, *Paradisi in sole*, Epistle to Reader, fol. **3v.

⁹ See McDougall E.B., “A Paradise of Plants: Exotica, Rarities and Botanical Fantasies”, in Kenseth J. (ed.), *The Age of the Marvelous*, [exh. cat. Hood Museum of Art, Hanover NH] (Hanover: 1991) 145–157, esp. 153, for early grafting techniques and their reception. She quotes the case of John Case, *Lapis philosophicus* (1599), for

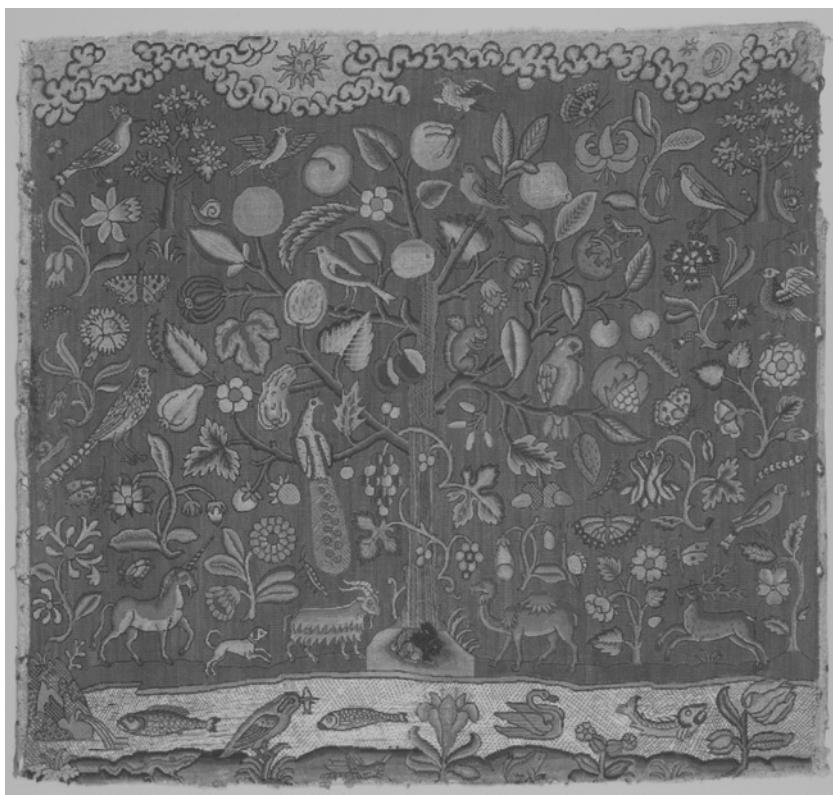


Fig. 2. [COL. PL. IV] *The Tree of Life*. English, first half of the seventeenth century. Canvas worked with silk thread, 57.1 × 63.1 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (64.101. 1305). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

into another stock was also used as a metaphor in seventeenth-century religious poetry. For example, Edward Taylor (*Meditations* 1.33) used grafting as a symbol of the bond between man and God:

Oh! Graft me in this Tree of Life within
The paradise of God, that I may live.
Thy Life make live in mee; I'le then begin
To bear thy Living Fruits, and them forth give.¹⁰

which see Schmitt C.B., "John Case on Art and Nature," *Annals of Science* 33 (1976) 543–559.

¹⁰ See Halbert C.L., "Tree of Life Imagery in the Poetry of Edward Taylor," *American Literature* 38, 1 (1966) 22–34, esp. 27–28, 31.

This continuity of the idea of a ‘sanctified’ Nature may also be seen in the many surviving embroidered scenes of Adam and Eve within the Garden of Eden. That this subject matter occurs in many varied domestic contexts, such as bed valances, book covers of family Bibles, cushion covers, and embroidered pictures, is testimony to the centrality of the Eden story and of the idea of Paradise as a metaphor in the lives of men and women of seventeenth-century England beyond the immediate context of church liturgy and worship. Adam and Eve were understood in a two-fold sense. Historically, they were the first ancestors of humanity, to whom contemporaries were therefore temporally linked. Spiritually, they were the perfect creations of God. By their condition and actions before the Fall, therefore, they provided a measure and model of ideal relations in every sphere of life. As Philip Almond has aptly written, the story of Adam and Eve in Eden ‘presented a story which enabled readers to construct accounts of the relations between men and women, between God and Humanity and between God, Nature and human-kind. It gave answers to the questions of suffering and pain and death. It legitimized particular authorities and institutions. And it explained the nature of humans in their present physical, moral, social and political conditions.’¹¹

First, let us examine the theme of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden in embroideries that pertained to specifically religious contexts. The theme occurs fairly frequently on embroidered Bible and prayer-book covers of the period. In this context the embroidered image often followed the design of the printed frontispieces and title-page illustrations of the vernacular Bibles, where it was by far the most commonly depicted subject. The presence of Adam and Eve took two chief forms: either a full image of the Temptation, such as the woodcut commonly found in editions of both the Geneva and the Bishops’ Bibles printed by Robert Barker [Fig. 3]; or a vignette in title-page borders, as part of a typological scheme that usually integrated Old and New Testament figures to suggest that the two ages of the Law and the Gospel formed a coherent and progressive process leading from the Fall to redemption through Christ [Fig. 4]. Such an image neatly visualized ‘the Summe of the whole Scripture’, as the verbal front matter of the Bishop’s Bible expressed it, and also proclaimed its purpose: to show

¹¹ Almond P.C., *Adam and Eve in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Cambridge: 1999) 1–2.



Fig. 3. Frontispiece to *Genesis*, *Geneva Bible* (London, Robert Barker: 1607), woodcut. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (64.101.1291). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

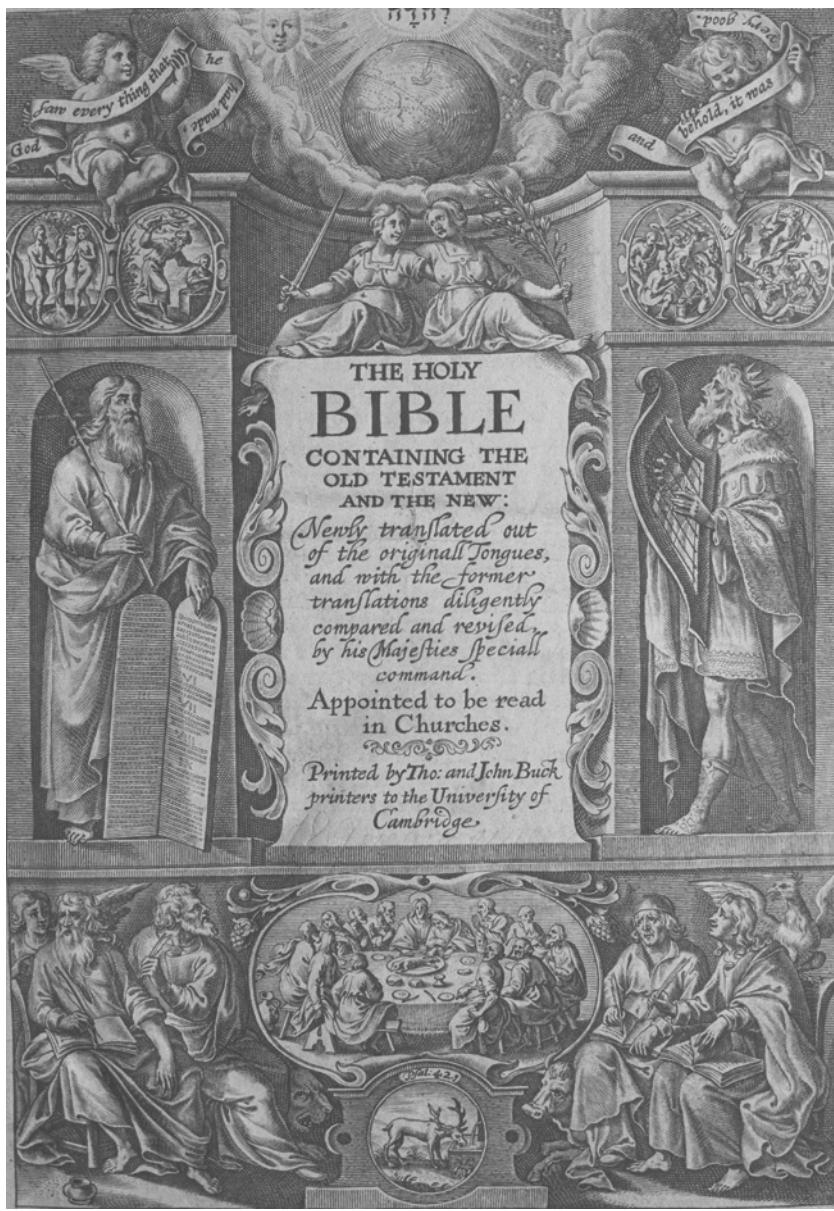


Fig. 4. Title page, *Authorized Bible* (Cambridge: 1630), engraving. The Rare Book and Manuscript Library of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

man his redemptive destiny and to indicate how it may be achieved. The presence of Adam and Eve, progenitors of the human race, was thus natural at the opening scene of what was regarded as the great drama of redemption.

These Bible illustrations, particularly those bound into the officially authorized versions, would have been the images of Eden most circulated and best known to an English seventeenth-century public.¹² The interpretations of the scene that they offer can therefore potentially reveal widely held attitudes and meanings that one might expect to have been shared by the embroiderers. A comparison between an embroidered Bible cover today in the Pierpont Morgan Library and the Robert Barker frontispiece, from which it is derived, is instructive in this regard [Fig. 5].¹³ The iconography of the woodcut makes explicit the message of Scripture's redemptive purpose. Both Adam and Eve hold fruit, suggesting their mutual culpability in the Fall [Fig. 3]; they also hold banderoles, which state that: 'desire to knowe hath wrought ovr woe. By tasting this th' exile of blisse'. Yet their other scrolls express their hope of future redemption: 'By promise made restord we be to pleasures of eternite'. Around them stands the whole of creation that is primordially good, symbolized by the Tree of Knowledge with its inscription 'Created good and faire, by breach of lawe a snare.' As Diane McColley has pointed out, the teeming creation and the equal share of man and woman in both fall and recovery were preferred themes for illustrations of Genesis in the vernacular Bibles of the Reformation, and therefore part of a wide culture of lay theological understanding.¹⁴

The Pierpont Morgan Library Bible cover adorns a 1639 reprint of the Geneva Bible containing the same woodcut frontispiece. This Bible is a singular document because it has an inscription written on the inside of the front cover, 'Tessie Wynn Freer from her Mother' along with the further couplet, 'Anne Cornwalys Wrought me/ now she is

¹² For the history of illustrations in English Bibles, see Strachan J., *Early Bible Illustrations* (Cambridge: 1957); Sandra Hindman (ed.), *The Early Illustrated Book: Essays in Honor of Lessing J. Rosenwald* (Washington D.C.: 1982); McKerrow R.B. – Ferguson F.S., *Title Page Borders Used in England and Scotland, 1485–1640* (London: 1932).

¹³ The connection was noted by Cabot N.G., "Pattern Sources of Scriptural Subjects in Tudor and Stuart Embroideries", *Bulletin of the Needle and Bobbin Club* 20, 1–2 (1946) 17–21.

¹⁴ McColley D.K., *A Gust for Paradise, Milton's Eden and the Visual Arts* (Urbana: 1993) 58–60.

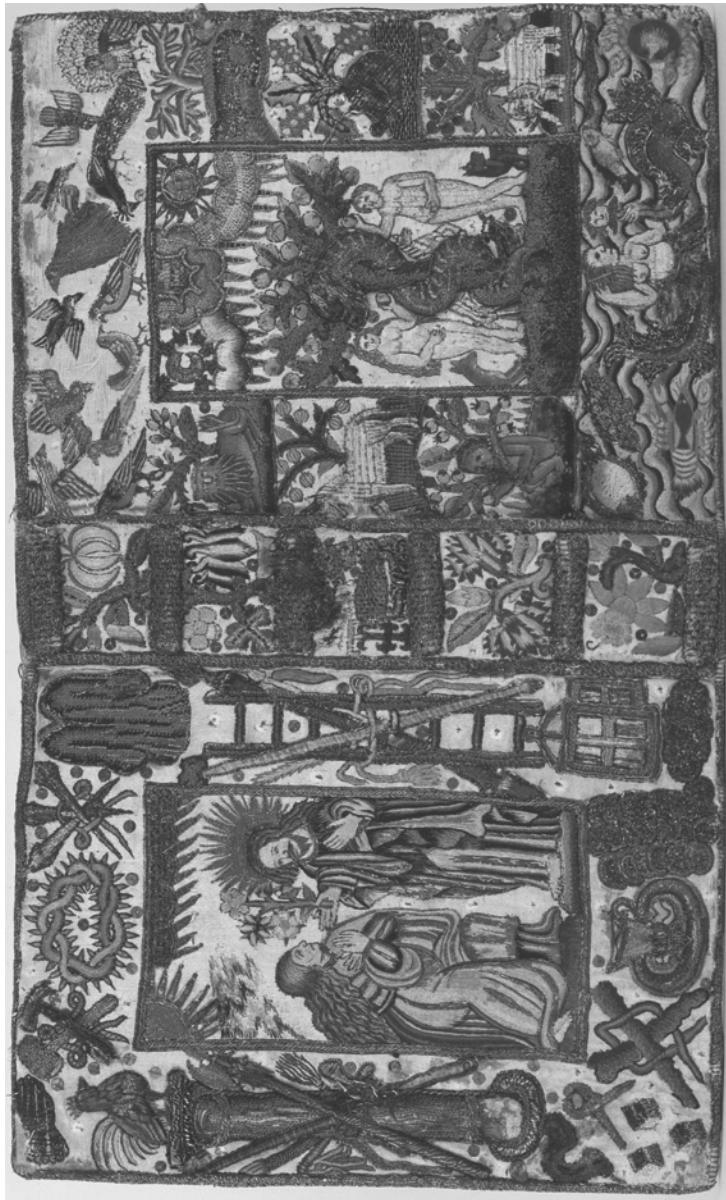


Fig. 5. Anne Cornwallys, Embroidered Bible cover with Adam and Eve (front) and the Resurrected Christ (back). English, ca. 1641. New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library (PM17197).

called Anne Leigh'. Although ambiguous, the inscriptions provide evidence of an embroidered cover probably made around 1640 by a private, amateur embroiderer. That a mother handed it down to her daughter, and that she or her daughter felt it sufficiently important a gift to record it as such, points to the personal significance such objects could possess between family members, particularly women. The inscription speaks to a personal object whose significance lay as much in the hand-wrought cover, the product of the mother's pious industry, as in the Bible itself as a coveted and well-used personal possession. In both aspects, it constitutes a symbol and a token of the mother's spiritual life, to be cherished as such by her daughter. In this personal sense, the image of humanity's first ancestors on a cover made by a parent may have reinforced the commemorative meaning to the daughter.

Such potential secondary meanings notwithstanding, it is interesting that although Anne Cornwallis created her own highly idiosyncratic design, she closely followed the spirit of the Robert Barker frontispiece. She transferred from the print not just the poses of Adam and Eve but also the central Tetragrammaton and the flanking sun, moon, and stars. That both Eve and Adam hold fruits from the Tree of Knowledge retains the emphasis of the idea of a mutual fall, a convention based on John Calvin's commentary that 'not the sinne came by the woman, but by Adam by Him selfe'.¹⁵ This provided the basis of the gloss on *Genesis* 3:6 found in the Geneva Bible, the same edition for which Anne Cornwallis made her cover. This states that Adam ate 'Not so much to please his wife, as moved by ambition at her persuasion'. Calvin was countering the popular view that Adam was seduced by Eve's 'alluring entisements' rather than by Satan. Adam did not 'transgresse the lawe which was giuen vnto him onely to obey his wife: but being also drawne by her pestilent ambition [...] he did gie more credit to the flattering speeches of the deuell, then to the holy word of God'.¹⁶ Cornwallis's imagery thus fits within a tradition of a mutual culpability, which was one aspect of a peculiarly Calvinist interpretation of the Fall.

¹⁵ Calvin John, *A commentarie vpon Genesis by John Calvin, Englished by Thomas Thymme* (London, Henry Middleton: 1578) 92.

¹⁶ Ibidem. For a wider discussion of his point, see McColley, *A Gust for Paradise* 56.

Yet beyond these few direct borrowings, the maker has created her own idiosyncratic image of Eden by using the *topos* of the Four Elements, which surround the central scene: Air above, filled with numerous birds; Water below with fish, a mermaid, and a lobster; Earth on either side, filled with edenic animals – the unicorn, monkey, elephant, and bear (?), together with four corresponding species of trees; and Fire, suggested by the fierce rays that emit from the Heavens above Adam and Eve. The Elements thus cleverly evoke the first four days of Creation while also vividly embodying the same idea of a teeming, prelapsarian Creation as was found in the Barker print. Like that print, Anne Cornwalys's design also addresses the Bible's central message of human redemption, albeit in a completely original way. The back cover is embroidered with the New Testament antitype of the Fall, an image of the Resurrected Christ, the second Adam, appearing to Mary Magdalene in the Garden, crowned with blazing halo and holding a flowering rod, symbol of resurrection and spiritual renewal [Fig. 5]. The sun and moon hover over him, just as they do over Adam and Eve in the first days of Creation on the front cover. The surrounding border contains symbols of his Passion and Crucifixion in an interesting survival of imagery drawn from a much earlier meditational handbook tradition. Taken in combination therefore, the front and back covers show how Cornwalys created a wholly original design around a coherent typological theme, which is imbued with an understanding of the redemptive purposes of Scripture. Cognizance of such apparently unique variations of popular themes can therefore sometimes reveal the subjective patterns of female piety, in this case conditioned by a reading of the Protestant Bible.

A similar redemptive message is expressed in another image of prelapsarian nature on an embroidered Bible cover, today in the Metropolitan Museum of Art [Fig. 6]. This is a work of extremely fine craftsmanship, almost certainly made by a professional embroiderer in the first quarter of the seventeenth century. It encloses the Book of Common Prayer and an edition of the Bishop's Bible, both printed in 1607 by Robert Barker in London, and both containing the same woodcut frontispiece. Here, too, the portrayal of Adam and Eve is centered less on the drama of the Fall than on the Garden. Extremely unusual, and perhaps unique, is the formal prominence given to the central spring and to the four streams emanating from it. These form a large, diagonally disposed cross over two thirds of the image field



Fig. 6. [COL. PL. V] Embroidered Bible cover with Adam And Eve and the Fountain of Life, enclosing *The Holy Bible and Book of Common Prayer* (London, Robert Barker: 1607), 34.4 × 23.5 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (64.101.1291). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

and relegate Adam and Eve beneath the Tree of Knowledge to the upper third. The spring and the streams represent ‘the Spring of Living Waters’, the fountain of Eden in *Genesis* 2:6, and the four rivers that ran from it to water the whole earth. Although the Barker print [Fig. 3] has been suggested as a possible source of inspiration, the prominence given to the waters in the woodcut conveys the impression of a pleasant, well-watered garden, sustaining creation in its primal innocence.¹⁷ The river does not divide into the four headwaters of *Genesis* 2:6, nor is there an originating spring. The imagery of the embroidered cover is, therefore, expressive of another meaning.

The notion that the fountain of Eden was the temporal source of the waters of the earth, and thus for the substance of all terrestrial life, persisted well into the seventeenth century.¹⁸ Yet the fountain of Eden was also widely understood as a symbol of God’s saving grace, and this meaning would have been immediately apparent to theologically versed readers for whom the image would have recalled other biblical references to regenerative waters.¹⁹ In this case, the fountain’s privileged position on the Bible’s cover, which made it in some sense an explication of the biblical narrative within, may best be seen in the light of a typological reading, for which its most important antitype comes at the very end of the Scriptures, in the Book of *Revelations* (21:16): ‘It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely’. As Donald Dickson has noted, ‘This text thus gave closure to the narrative structure of the Bible with the restoration of mankind to the paradise that was lost. The fountain in the Garden of Eden, the point of entry for the subterranean waters that arise to fecundate

¹⁷ Untermyer I. – Hackenbroch Y., *English and Other Needlework, Tapestries, and Textiles in the Irwin Untermyer Collection* (Cambridge, MA: 1960) xxiv–xxvi, suggested it as a possible source.

¹⁸ Dickson D.R., *The Fountain of Living Waters. The Typology of the Waters of Life in Herbert, Vaughan and Traherne* (Columbia: 1987) 49–50.

¹⁹ Thus, an expositor such as Josue de La Place connected the rivers in Eden with *Revelations* 22:1, as well as with other Old Testament types and New Testament antitypes: ‘Qui fluvius, quatenus est in Ecclesia, etiam agente in terris, describitur plenius. Ezechiel 47. Est autem Spiritus sanctus Joh. 7.38 Esai. 44.3 &c., fluvius justitiae et pacis Esai. 48.18 et 66.12 & voluptatis Ps. 36.9’, in Place Josue de la, *De Primo typo, videlicet creatione mundi*, in *Opuscula nonnulla* (Saumur, Johannes Lesner: 1656) 90. In England, John Bale treats the theme similarly in *The Ymage of Bothe Churches after the [...] Revelacioun of Sainte Jouhn the Evangelyst* (London, Ihon Daye – William Seres:1550) fol. I i 5r–v. Cited in Dickson, *Fountain of Living Waters* 70, n. 107.

paradise and, through the four rivers, the entire earth in an endless circulation, is fulfilled by its antitype'.²⁰ The waters of the fountain of Eden would thus have been read typologically and symbolically as a symbol of the promise of future redemption.

Such analogies and connections would have been made not only by theologians but also by a church-going laity accustomed to hearing continual re-readings of Scripture – the complete Psalter was read to them every month, the New Testament three times a year, and the Old Testament once a year – and attuned to various thematic patterns that the choice of daily readings was intended to bring out. The waters of life played a recurrent part in this process. Dickson alluded to one particular set of daily readings in the weeks before Easter, laid down in the Book of Common Prayer, that emphasized the typology of the waters of life and helped ‘establish the essential biblical narrative structure of Paradise lost and regained’ to a very wide public.²¹ These readings occur on Septuagesima Sunday, the third Sunday before Lent, where the lessons for Matins are *Genesis* 1:1–24 and *Revelation* 21:1–9; for Evensong they are *Genesis* 2:4 and *Revelation* 21:9–22:6; and the Introit for the service is the twenty-third Psalm: ‘The Lord is my shepherd: therefore can I lack nothing. He shall feed me in a green pasture: and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort’. This conjunction of passages which, as Dickson put it, ‘so obviously emphasizes the beginning and end of time and features as two of its major images the waters of the creation and the crystal fountain of Revelation’²² would have had a powerful and lasting resonance, particularly in the emotional build-up of the liturgy before Easter. To locate the Bible cover within this kind of active liturgical context is thus to bring out the profoundly mediated theological import contained within the image, one reinforced by the personal and enigmatic inscription embroidered beneath the scene of Eden which reads, ‘A Dreame’. One may interpret this as the evocation of a dream-vision, speaking to a retrospective longing for the perfect Nature pictured above it and to its ultimate fulfillment via the redemptive Grace of the hoped-for waters of life in the City of God.

²⁰ Ibidem 70.

²¹ Ibidem 73.

²² Ibidem.

Natural Innocence: Adam and Eve in Eden

Turning now from specifically liturgical works to more general domestic embroideries, one finds that their makers also reveled in re-creating the natural beauty of Eden in often unique and personal creations, investing them with spiritual and often specifically redemptive meaning. For the most part, these makers were almost certainly adult women householders or professionals of some kind. Their originality is borne out in an embroidered panel from the Metropolitan Museum's collection, which is unusual in that it shows Adam and Eve all but submerged in a garden setting of luxuriant and overwhelming floral and animal life [Fig. 7]. More than any other surviving embroidered scene, this work places its emphasis on Adam and Eve in their prelapsarian innocence. Although the narrative of the Fall is not omitted – Eve holds an apple in each hand, given to her by the serpent that coils around the central tree, one of which she will offer to Adam – the drama of the Fall, with its usual insistence on Original Sin, is all but lost. Instead, Adam is shown reclining comfortably within a domain of teeming, primal nature. The scene is dominated by three trees that are bursting with overripe fruits. Among the many animals, the sheep and the hart lie down with the lion and the bear with the oxen, expressing the original harmony that existed among the animals. The dense imagery combined with the variety of mimetic stitching techniques powerfully conveys the sense of twisting organic growth and brings to mind the tumbling metre of Milton's description in *Paradise Lost* (4.241–43) of:

Flow'rs worthy of Paradise which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, But Nature boon
Poured forth profuse on hill and dale and plain.

The fact that both Adam and Eve are all but obscured by a curling vine and a strawberry plant, respectively, adds to a sense of a nature wild and regenerate, in which all creation coexists harmoniously.

The panel is of interest in that this picture of primal innocence is accompanied by four allegorical personifications: Constancy, Innocence, Concord, and Peace.²³ Placed in oval cartouches in the sky

²³ The Virtues are derived from prints by Peter de Jode, after Maarten de Vos. See Morrall – Watt, *English Embroidery*, cat. 76, 269–270.



Fig. 7. [COL. PL. VI] Embroidered cushion cover with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. English, first half of the seventeenth century, 57.1 × 93.3 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (64.101.1288). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

overhead, flanking the central eye of God, they constitute virtuous conditions that both individually and collectively speak to the harmony of prelapsarian Nature beneath. The unwarranted presence of two small putti, who flank the central Tree of Knowledge and gesture rhetorically toward God's creation, reinforces the allegorical character of the scene by forming a bridge between the Virtues suspended in the sky above and the beauty of the Garden below.²⁴

This allegorical rather than typological interpretation of Creation points to a different understanding of ideal nature and to a different tradition of biblical interpretation. And, indeed, it is possible to find numerous instances drawn from different strands of seventeenth-century religious thinking that framed the concept of edenic innocence in similarly allegorical terms. Philip Almond has traced a platonic tradition of 'a Paradise within' among both Protestant divines and poets, such as Henry Vaughan and Thomas Traherne, and nonconformists and dissenters, for whom the Garden of Eden served as a spiritual ideal toward which the individual soul should strive. For Vaughan and Traherne, the return to the innocence of infancy became a way of realizing this inner Paradise.²⁵ The Quaker George Fox used the Garden of Eden as a symbol of original innocence in the account he gave of his own experience of spiritual conversion:

Now was I come up in Spirit [...] into the *Paradise of God*. All things were New; and all the *Creation* gave another Smell unto me, than before, beyond what words can utter. I knew I knew nothing, but *Pureness*, and *Innocency*, and *Righteousness*, being renewed up into the *Image of God* by Christ Jesus; so that I say, I was come up to the *State of Adam*, which he was in before he fell.²⁶

In a similar vein, the Leveller, Gerrard Winstanley, saw that the task of each individual was to reclaim the paradise within the soul by the cultivation of inner virtues, 'plaine heartedness without guile, quiet, patient, chast, loving, without envy [...]. This is the Garden of Eden [...] this is the field of heaven'.²⁷ In deliberately vesting Eden with similar

²⁴ Compare with the similar rhetorical function of the putti in the title page of the Cambridge Authorized Bible of 1630, fig. 4.

²⁵ Almond, *Adam and Eve* 67.

²⁶ Fox George, *A Journal or Historical Account of the Life of [...] George Fox*, 2 vols. (London, Thomas Northcott: 1694) I 17–18. Cited in Almond, *Adam and Eve* 68.

²⁷ From *Fire in the Bush*, ca. 1650, in Sabine G.H. (ed.), *The Works of Gerrard Winstanley* (Ithaca, New York: 1914) 481.

ethical qualities, the embroiderer of this panel provided an exemplar of an ideal state of being to which she aspired. In a domestic context, this exemplar – perhaps intended as a bible cushion – may have been intended to stimulate reflection upon the state of the individual soul, as in the examples quoted, or on the state of the marital union and the home, for which, as discussed below, prelapsarian Adam and Eve provided a potent model.

Adam and Eve: Love and Marriage

An understanding of Adam and Eve in Eden as exemplary models for married life may explain the use of the theme as the subject of large interior furnishings, such as an embroidered panel, one of a set of three, and a set of bed valances, both dating from the late sixteenth century [Figs. 8–9, 10–12].²⁸ Figure 8 shows the second part of the story (*Genesis 3:8–10, 21–24*), which concerns God's discovery of Adam and Eve's transgression, their repentance, and the expulsion from Eden. The first two scenes are conflated into a single representation of Adam and Eve, who remain huddled behind undergrowth, their hands folded in penitence as they confront two manifestations of God the Father. In the first, God bursts upon them from the clouds above; in the second he stands before them, his hand raised in a (two-fingered) sign of forgiveness. The final scene shows Adam and Eve, idiosyncratically dressed and groomed in contemporary fashion, being gently escorted out of Eden by the Angel in a distinctly dignified manner. In general, the scene of Adam and Eve's discovery of sin and their expulsion, traditionally a dramatic high point of the story that constitutes the tragic hinge on which the condition of humanity turned, is treated with great restraint. The tone is not one of tragedy or the drama of loss, but of penitence, forgiveness, and hope. This is conveyed not only by narrative emphasis, but by a number of motifs as well, including the two very prominent vines that flank the central tree (possibly the Tree of Life?). These evoke Christ's sacrifice and the promise of human salvation, set out in *John 15:5*: 'I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit'.

²⁸ Figs. 12 and 15–17 are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. See Morrall – Watt, *English Embroidery* 258–263, nos. 72–73.



Fig. 8. [COL. PL. VII] Embroidered panel of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. English, last quarter of the sixteenth century, 57.1 × 203 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (64.101.1284). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Fig. 9. Two embroidered panels of the Story of Adam and Eve. English, last quarter of the sixteenth century, 51 × 147 cm and 51 × 198 cm. Image courtesy of Christie, Manson and Wood, London.



Fig. 10. Embroidered panel with scenes from Genesis: *The Creation of Eve; The Temptation*. 53 × 173.7 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (60.166.1). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Fig. 11. Embroidered panel with scenes from Genesis: *Adam and Eve making Garments of Leaves; God Admonishing Adam and Eve*. 50.2 × 171.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (40.178). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Fig. 12. Embroidered panel with scenes from Genesis: *The Expulsion; Adam and Eve after the Fall*. 52.1 × 214 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (60.166.2). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Another motif is Adam and Eve's contemporary clothing, which may also be regarded as signifying God's forgiveness and the promise of redemption. The motif adapts *Genesis* 3:21, when God, having admonished Adam and Eve, made them 'coats of skins, and clothed them'. This act of robing was commonly interpreted as a scriptural symbol of regeneration. Contemporary expositors equated this act with 'the garments of salvation' and the 'robe of righteousness' described in *Isaiah* 62:10, 'He hath clothed me with garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels'.²⁹ The passage concludes, 'For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all nations' (*Isaiah* 61:11). In the light of this passage, amid the teeming plenitude of the fruit trees, the robes of Adam and Eve may be seen as a gift of rehabilitation from a compassionate creator. The sheer beauty of the garden surroundings establishes the mood and affirms—by aesthetic affect—the principle of original Goodness.

The two other panels of this set, which resurfaced briefly on the art market in 2001, establish that the Metropolitan Museum's panel was the second of the sequence [Fig. 9].³⁰ The first shows the earlier episodes of the Creation story, namely the creation of Adam and of Eve and of their union by God. The other panel, the third in the series, illustrates the post-edenic world. Adam digs and Eve spins at left and right, while their sons Cain and Abel till the ground and tend sheep respectively, following the account in *Genesis* 4:2. The continuing story of Cain and Abel is told in two inset panels that show the Sacrifices to God of Cain and Abel, and Cain slaying Abel. Nonetheless, the placidly idyllic character of the scene, with the protagonists portrayed as contemporaries occupied in farming pursuits, within a decorative landscape setting no less ideal than those of Eden, implies a continuity that links the foundational story of man's first parents with the present condition of striving humanity. This essentially optimistic iconography,

²⁹ See also *Psalm* 32:1; the parable of the wedding guest, *Matthew* 22:2–14; *2 Corinthians* 5:3; *Revelations* 3:18, 7:9–14, and 16:15; and Dante's interpretation in *Paradiso* 25, 91–96. Cited in McColley, *A Gust for Paradise* 42, 67 n. 65.

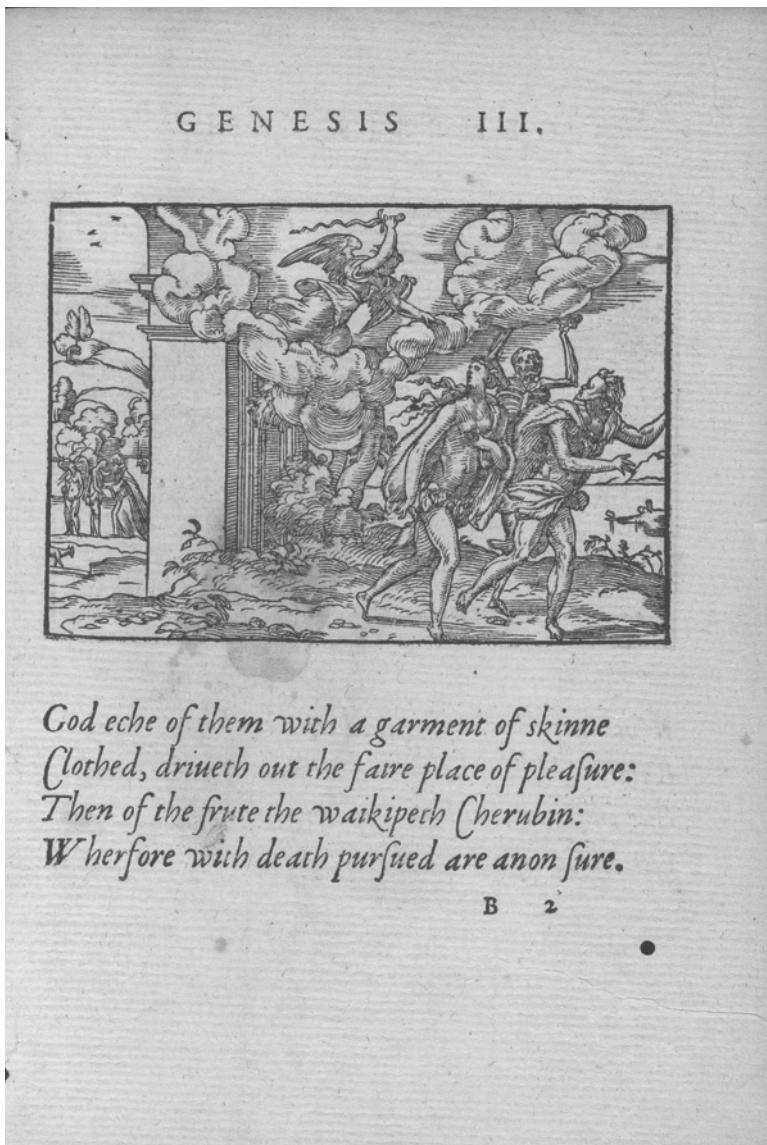
³⁰ *Sale of Fine Needlework, Costume and Textiles*, Christie, Manson and Wood, South Kensington, London 20th November, 2001, 196, lots 109 and 110. The panels were formerly in the Smart Museum, University of Chicago. Present whereabouts unknown.

showing an end in *fruitful* labour, differs strikingly from the conventional figures of a despondent Adam and Eve bemoaning their loss and working a fallen, infertile earth, and is thus suggestive of a positive outcome for humanity.

Such a gentle interpretation of the story is brought into sharp relief by comparison with a set of three roughly contemporary bed valances [Figs. 10–12]. These tell the same Genesis story, beginning with the creation of Eve. They include the eating of the forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve's loss of innocence, God's admonishment, their expulsion from Eden, and their new life of toil. These scenes are based on the woodcuts of Bernard Solomon (ca. 1506–1561) that illustrated the highly popular *Quadrins Historiques de la Bible* (Lyons: 1553), printed by the French reformist publisher Jean de Tournes, and they retain something of the harsh character of their prototypes [Figs. 13 and 14]. In the verse couplets of the English translation, God does not chide and admonish Adam and Eve for their transgression, but rather, 'His curse them gaue and his malediction,/ For dispising of his holie bidding'. The embroidered Expulsion scene [Fig. 12] adopts to a high degree the woodcut's drama and violence. Above all, it takes over the motif of Adam and Eve running away fearfully (and unknowingly) into the embrace of Death, figured here as a skeleton. The scene underlines the grim central significance of the Fall for Christians; namely, the loss of their original state of physical and spiritual perfection and their consequent lapse into mortality, sin, disease, and death. This bleak vision is enlarged upon in the next woodcut of the series [Fig. 14], which shows the couple in an unforgiving, fallen world. Adam slumped in an attitude of melancholy and Eve in the pangs of childbirth, are accompanied by the following couplets:

With muche droping and sweat of his visage,
Eateth Adam his bread new and moderne:
Eue in sorrow and care of her ménage,
Geveth out great cries bringing fourth of childeyne.

Yet, even here, though the embroiderer has faithfully followed the poses of the woodcut illustrations for the first five scenes and retained the dramatic quality of the originals, the impulse towards a more benevolent and hopeful interpretation of Genesis is evident in the modification of the last scene. Although Adam also rests despondently from his labors, the harsh image of Eve in the pain of childbirth has been replaced by the more conventional picture of her spinning wool.



*God eche of them with a garment of skinne
Clothed, drieueth out the faire place of pleasure:
Then of the frute the waikiperh Cherubin:
Wherfore with death pursued are anon sure.*

B 2

Fig. 13. Bernard Solomon, *The Expulsion from Eden*. Woodcut from *The true and lyuely historyke purtreasures of the Vvoll Bible* (English Edition of the *Quadrins Historiques de la Bible*, Jean de Tournes, Lyons: 1553). Houghton Library, Cambridge Mass (Typ 515.53.674).

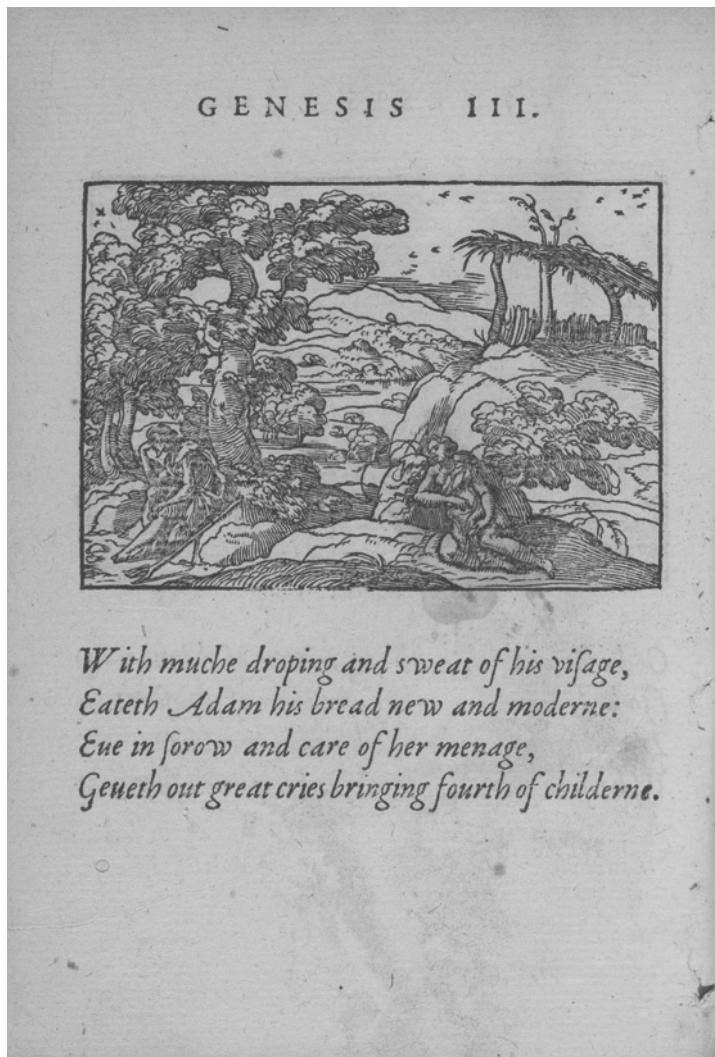


Fig. 14. Bernard Solomon, *Adam and Eve after the Fall*. Woodcut from *The true and lyuely historyke purtreatures of the Vvoll Bible* (English Edition of the *Quadrins Historiques de la Bible*, Jean de Tournes, Lyons: 1553). Houghton Library, Cambridge Mass, (Typ 515.53.674).

Behind them, moreover, a dead tree stump sprouts new leaves, a symbol of new life and resurrection; and around them, in the corners of the border, are symbols of the Four Evangelists, an allusion to the New Testament and to Christ's intervention, which will usher in the Age of Grace through which men will be saved.

The religious attitude behind these two series, already evident in the frontispiece illustrations and textual glosses of the vernacular Bibles, celebrated creation and mourned its loss, but lived in expectation of a paradise regained. It was a view widely held within the culture, and found its apogée in Milton's poetic epic. Central to this idea is the celebration of the beauty and essential goodness of original Creation, an attitude poetically expressed in the Expulsion scene [fig. 8] through the rich colors and patterns of the Garden of Eden's embroidered forms. In a striking parallel, the viticulturalist Ralph Austen was inspired by the natural beauty of his own orchard to record a set of spiritual reflections using precisely the same images and biblical passages that are invoked in the embroidered scene. In a passage of his otherwise wholly practical *Treatise of frvit trees* (Oxford: 1653), he sees while strolling among his trees, 'Our Saviour [who] had the custom of walking in a garden – John 18:1'³¹ and hears 'Our Saviour [who] used the similitude of the vine to express the condition of his Church – John 15:1'.³² Later on, he recalls original sin, which had taken place in a garden of fruit trees, but, looking beyond sin, he sees Christ on the cross and rejoices in God's 'infinite and boundless mercy'.³³ Finally, as he stops to look at a fruit tree, he recognizes that a 'fruit-tree beares the figure and resemblance of our Saviour Christ in the description of Spirituall Paradise – Revel. 22:2 and 2:7'.³⁴ In an unusually specific manner, Austen uses the same images of the garden and vine that are contained in the imagery of the Expulsion panel and the valances to express a hope for redemption.

Such a pointedly theological reading of the embroideries, which places emphasis on human redemption while not excluding sin and loss, emerges from their iconography, which is meditated and deliberate and presumably lent itself to spiritual meditations such as Austen's.

³¹ Ralph Austen, *A Treatise of frvit trees* (Oxford, Thomas Robinson: 1653) 26.

³² Ibid. 27.

³³ Ibid. 57.

³⁴ Ibid. 29. See Otten C.F., *Environ'd with Eternity. God, Poems and Plants in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England* (Lawrence KA: 1985) 14.

In two of the bed valence panels [Figs. 10 and 11], the theological import is strengthened by a small physical detail. The robes of the figure of God in each case are made of applied silk and metal thread pieces, distinguished from the rest of the panel by an older, richer technique in which they are worked, one associated with luxurious imported textiles known in the sixteenth century as ‘tissue’ and normally reserved for ecclesiastical vestments. This carries the strong suggestion that the embroiderer has used precious remnants of just such older ecclesiastical vestments, seized from monasteries and churches during the Reformation. That these fragments were reserved for the figure of God, moreover, suggests something of the sacred nature and reverence with which the material was invested.³⁵ Within a broader domestic setting, this meaning might well have been subsumed by the householders’ broader aesthetic delight in covering their walls and framing their beds with scenes of natural beauty; nonetheless, neither impetus is wholly separable from the other. The aesthetic pleasure in natural forms, inevitably tinged by the substrate of theological meaning, would have conveyed a sense of pristine Eden, to which contemporaries, by virtue of their originating history, felt a spiritual affinity.

Depictions of Adam and Eve were also popular as a theme for domestic settings, because, as the first married couple sanctioned by God, their actions and their relations with each other and with God were universally regarded as models for the ideal marriage. The set of valances, in fact, contain one further iconographic singularity that suggests it was made with this exemplary intention in mind. This is the fact that the story begins, not as one might expect with the Creation of Adam, but with the Creation of Eve, raised by God from Adam’s rib [Fig. 10].³⁶ Prominence is thus given to the part of Genesis in which Adam welcomes his new helpmeet and which articulated for seventeenth-century contemporaries the basis of an ideal of mutual and companionate marriage: ‘And Adam Said, This is now bone of

³⁵ A similar re-usage of pre-Reformation ecclesiastical vestments is to be found in hangings in Hardwick Hall. See Levey S.M., *The Embroideries at Hardwick Hall: A Catalogue* (London: 2007) 44–47; 58–179. See also Morrall – Watt, *English Embroidery* 258–261, no. 72.

³⁶ The Creation of Eve, rather than the Fall, serves as the central event in many Renaissance and Reformation cycles. The most famous is Ghiberti’s Gates of Paradise cycle, where the Fall is relegated to the background. It also serves as the frontispiece or the headpiece to Genesis in several early Reformation Bibles, for instance the headpiece to Genesis in the Coverdale Bible 1535. See McColley, *A Gust for Paradise* 30.

my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh' (*Genesis* 2:23–24). The marriage service of the 1549 Anglican Book of Common Prayer had referred to this passage when it defined marriage as, 'as an honourable estate, instituted of God in paradise, in the time of man's innocency', outlining the purposes of matrimony as the procreation of children, the avoidance of lust, and 'the mutual society, help, and comfort, that the one ought to have of the other'.³⁷ Companionate marriage was thus justified through the *Genesis* metaphor. For the puritan Henry Smith, marriage 'was the first ordinance that God instituted, euen the first thing which he did after man and woman were created, & that in the state of innocencie, before either had sinned, like ye finest flower, which will not thriue but in a cleane ground'.³⁸ The anatomy of the rib often served as a sign of intimacy and affection between man and wife. In a wedding sermon, Smith reminded his listeners that, 'the husband must set [his wife] at his heart, and therefore she which should lie in his bosome, was made in his bosome, and should be as close to him as his ribbe, of which she was fashioned'.³⁹ For Thomas Gataker, husbands and wives reenacted the original separation of Adam and Eve in reverse: 'There is in most *men* and *women* naturally an inclination and propension to the *nuptiall conjunction*. *The man seekest his rib*, say the *Rabbines*; and *the woman the mans side*. *The man misseth his rib*, and seeketh to recover it againe, and the *woman* would bee in her old place againe, under the *mans arme or wing*, from whence at first shee was taken'.⁴⁰ While marriage remained an unequal partnership, the wife's subjection to the husband's unquestioned authority in all things being sanctioned by law and custom, the ideal of the companionate marriage was nonetheless gaining ground and sometimes explicitly celebrated by embroiderers using the Adam and Eve metaphor. A sampler verse recognizes the paradox:

³⁷ See Bailey D.S., *The Man-Woman Relation in Christian Thought* (London: 1959) 197.

³⁸ Smith Henry, *The Sermons of Master Henry Smith*. Cited by Almond, *Adam And Eve* 155.

³⁹ Ibidem 12; Almond, *Adam And Eve* 148.

⁴⁰ Gataker Thomas, *A Good Wife Gods Gift, and A Wife in Deed* (London, Fulke Clifton: 1623) 37. Quoted in Turner J.G., *One Flesh. Paradisal Marriage and Sexual Relations in the age of Milton* (Oxford: 1987) 73.

Adam alone in Paradise did grieve
 And thought Eden a desert without Eve
 Until God pitying his lonesome state
 Crowns all his wishes with a lovely mate
 Then why should men think mean, or slight her
 That could not live in Paradise without her.⁴¹

Like other commonly embroidered Old Testament themes, therefore, the various images of Adam and Eve might have been considered appropriate exemplary images for the marital home. It is this function that determined their character and isolated them from the usual iconographic treatment of the Fall, widespread since the late fifteenth century, which equated the Fall of Man with the Temptation of Adam by Eve and original sin with lust.⁴² Instead, in seeking a subject that was both aesthetically beautiful and ethically appropriate, the embroiderers looked back to an older, pre-Reformation vision of Genesis, found in medieval stone carvings, church portals, and the decoration of Psalters. Within these visual traditions the Genesis narrative, in spite of the Fall, is essentially celebratory of the original goodness of Creation.⁴³

Adam and Eve and Royalty

An unusual embroidered panel juxtaposes King Charles I and his consort, Henrietta Maria with Adam and Eve beneath the Tree of Knowledge [Fig. 15].⁴⁴ The direct association made here between contemporary royalty and Adam and Eve is unique among surviving embroidered pictures, and indeed among the images of royalty in every medium. It therefore has significance within the wider field of royal iconography of the Caroline era. The embroidery can be dated to a time after 1634, because the poses of Charles I and Henrietta Maria

⁴¹ Cited (although without source reference) by Parker R., *The Subversive Stitch. Embroidery and the making of the feminine* (New York: 1989) 91.

⁴² See, for instance, the versions of the Fall by such artists as Hans Baldung Grien discussed in Koerner J.L., *The Moment of Self-Portraiture in German Renaissance Art* (Chicago: 1993) 292–316.

⁴³ See McColley, *A Gust for Paradise* 18–60, for an extended discussion of this tradition in poetry and art.

⁴⁴ Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (64.101. 1290). See Morrall – Watt, *English Embroidery* 122–123, no. 6.



Fig. 15. Embroidered panel with *Adam and Eve* and *King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria*. English, after 1634, 50.1 × 54.3 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (64.101. 1290). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

are derived from an engraving by Robert van Voerst first published in that year [Fig. 16]. The print shows Charles and Henrietta Maria exchanging olive and laurel branches, emblems of peace and military glory, and it celebrates their marriage and the political advantages that accrued from it.⁴⁵

This association between royal marriage and royal authority is carried over into the embroidery, which, apart from the poses of the royal

⁴⁵ The print is a copy of the painting by Anthony van Dyck of 1632, which itself is a reworking of an original by Daniel Mytens of ca. 1630–1632. See Millar O., “Some Painters and Charles I”, *Burlington Magazine* 104, 713 (1962) 323–330. See also Peacock J., “The Visual Image of Charles I”, in T.N. Corns (ed.), *The Royal Image. Representations of Charles I* (Cambridge:1999) 226–227.



Fig. 16. Robert Van Voerst, after Anthony Van Dyck, *Charles I and Henrietta Maria*. Engraving on paper, 41.5 × 55.8 cm. London, The National Portrait Gallery (NPG D32047).

couple, retains little of the symbolism of its prototype. In place of the exchange of olive and laurel branches between the royal couple, Henrietta Maria offers her husband a flower, while Charles holds a sword and scepter, symbols of fertility and worldly dominion respectively. The association of the royal marriage and Charles's symbols of monarchy with their progenitors, the first married couple, carries the suggestion that Charles's claim to royal authority rests on a chain of royal – specifically familial – descent stretching back to the Fall and even before that, to humankind's state of innocence. Such a juxtaposition would have resonated in the 1630s and 1640s with the political debates that raged over the nature of political authority. In these debates, the varied justifications for political organization, whether Royalist, Parliamentarian, or Leveller, were invariably based on some understanding of Adamic patriarchy and the first marriage. For all political complexities, the concept of Paradise that had once existed in some place and time provided the key to the way in which ideal social relations once were and ought still to be.⁴⁶

The theme of the panel appears to be an explicit reflection of the argument of the Royalists, who saw Adamic patriarchy as the basis of the divine right of kings. Thomas Peyton in 1620 described James I as 'A royall King deriued from the race,/ Of Edens Monarch in her greatest grace,/ Within whose face true Maiesty doth shine'.⁴⁷ According to Richard Cumberland, a friend of Samuel Pepys, 'Humankind, and by consequence, all Societies and Families sprang from the matrimonial Union of one *Man* with one *Woman*. And, consequently, all *Civil Government* is originally laid out in a *natural Parental Authority*'.⁴⁸ Such arguments and their counter-arguments, which maintained that the right to govern derived from the consent of the people, were furiously debated during the crisis of Parliament and the Civil War years of the 1640s. John Maxwell, chaplain to Charles I, in *Sacro-Sancta Regum Majestas* (1644) argued that monarchy was fixed by God in the time before the Fall. 'Can we be so stupid as to acknowledge the dominion over all creatures below is given to man immediately by God, and to

⁴⁶ For a discussion of Adamic patriarchy in this regard, see Almond, *Adam and Eve* 102–9.

⁴⁷ Peyton Thomas, *The Glasse of Time* (London, Laurence Chapman: 1620) 60; quoted in Almond, *Adam and Eve* 105.

⁴⁸ Cumberland Richard, *De Legibus Naturae* (London, Nathaniel Hooke – Richard Chiswell – et al. ii: 1672) 6.4; quoted in Slotkin J. (ed.), *Readings in Early Anthropology* (1965) 158.

deny that the most noble and excellent Government by which man hath Power and Empire over men is not from God [...] but by Compact and Contract, the Composition and Constitution of men?'.⁴⁹ Sir Robert Filmer, in his *Patriarcha: or, The Natural Right of Kings* (probably written about 1630, but not published until 1680), justified monarchy on hereditary grounds – that Adam and the patriarchs after him had royal authority over their children by right of fatherhood, and that this authority had been given to them by God. ‘The first Father had not only simply power, but power monarchical, as he was a Father immediately from God. For by the appointment of God, as soon as Adam was created he was monarch of the world, though he had no subjects’.⁵⁰ For Filmer, Adam’s was ‘[a]s large and ample as the Absolutest Dominion of any Monarch which hath been since the Creation’.⁵¹

Such views reached the popular domain via sermons and pamphlets. John Evelyn recorded in a diary entry of May 1678, having heard a sermon that argued for the monarchical over all other systems of government, ‘& that from Adam (to whom God had given the *Empire* of all things & Persons) that it seemed to be not onely of divine, but most natural institution’. And on January 30, 1694, the anniversary of the death of Charles I, Evelyn heard a young man preach on the ‘Excel- lency of Kingly Government above all other, deriving it from Adam, The Patriarchs, God himself’.⁵²

The panel therefore shows an embroiderer responding to these debates, asserting sympathy for the Royalist cause. As such, it shows the expressive freedom of the embroidery medium which, by virtue of its relatively private nature allowed its makers to react personally to events and to create images encompassing themes that lay outside and beyond the iconographical norms of public art, both popular prints and the more exclusive iconography of the court.

By the second half of the seventeenth century, especially after the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, the taste for embroidered biblical subject matter, and with it, images of Adam and Eve, began to wane, and to be replaced by more secular themes. Popular among these was

⁴⁹ Maxwell John, *Sacro-Sancta Regum Majestas* (London, Thomas Dring: 1680) 72, as cited in Almond, *Adam and Eve* 105.

⁵⁰ Laslett P. (ed.), *Patriarcha and Other Political Works of Sir Robert Filmer* (Oxford: 1949) 289.

⁵¹ Filmer Robert, *Patriarcha* (London, Walter Davis: 1680) 13.

⁵² Evelyn John, *The Diaries*, ed. E.S. de Beer (London: 1959) 649, 976, as cited in Almond, *Adam and Eve* 105.

a type that might be termed the ‘companionate couple’, which also redounded upon the theme of marriage. Typically such images contained a centrally placed couple in contemporary dress, placed amid landscape and garden elements, such as a rock pool or ornamental pond, fruit trees, domestic animals, and a country house in the background. This companionate type is exemplified in a charming bead-work panel [fig. 17], initialed A.H. and dated 1651, that probably once served as the cover of a casket.⁵³ Collectively, these various elements tie the couple to the idea of an *actual* place: we assume the house to be theirs, as well as the garden or parkscape in which they stand. In this example, the idea of harmonious marriage, cast in terms of a peculiarly English rural ideality, is placed at the center of a wider, ordered universe. The couple, surrounded by symmetrically disposed figures representing the Four Continents, occupy a harmonious domestic world that stands at the eye of the greater macrocosm and maintains the latter’s orbit by its centrifugal pull. The scheme thus presents with all the elegance and concision of an emblem an ideal of social hierarchy and natural order in which marriage and property are central. Brightly colored trees at each corner of the panel, bursting with leaf and fruit, underline this sense of harmonious structure, while the eye is encouraged nonetheless to weave its way across a patterned surface of tiny animals and hugely looming flowers according to a wayward logic that is poetic and decorative rather than strictly pictorial. By its idealizing nature, the patterned surface testifies to the fruitfulness and prosperity of the couple’s union. The richness of the natural elements that in the images of the Garden of Eden had provided a nature both sacred and ideal for Adam and Eve in the innocence and perfection of their married state, now gives poetic expression to a secular conception of courtship and marriage underwritten by an ideology of property and place. Though the original biblical model of social hierarchy has been discarded, remaining only as an echo within the pictorial structure, the impulse that had sustained the traditional themes of floral embroidery, namely, the numinous sense of the natural world within domestic life, based on an essentially theological foundation, has been both transformed and maintained within this new, secular scheme.

⁵³ The panel is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (59.208.68). See Morrall – Watt, *English Embroideries* 288–89, no. 89, and 90–97 for further examples and discussion of this type.



Fig. 17. Beadwork panel with a Lady and Gentleman Surrounded by the Four Continents. English, 1651, 41.2 x 54.5 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, (59.208.68). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Though henceforth domestic embroidery would rarely speak explicitly to the authority of the Bible, these underlying similarities with the older form, as striking as any differences in mode of representation, ensured the continuing possibility of the spiritual within the English floral decorative tradition of the succeeding centuries.

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IV. VERBAL AND VISUAL INSTRUMENTS
OF DEVOTIONAL AUTHORITY

“PRACTICAL DEVOTION.” APOTROPAISM AND THE PROTECTION OF THE SOUL

John R. Decker

Petrus Christus’ *Portrait of a Female Donor*, 1450 [Fig. 1], offers the viewer a glimpse into the private world of a well-to-do lady absorbed in her devotions. The fine, fur-lined gown she wears, as well as the architecture of the room and the presence of a heraldic device signals her elevated social status.¹ The *prie-dieu* at which she kneels, the book of hours before her, her prayerful posture, and the hand-colored print of St. Elizabeth of Hungary affixed to the wall with daubs of wax attest to her piety. Both this portrait and a companion image of a male donor, also shown kneeling in prayer in an equally elegant setting, was likely affixed to a larger triptych.² Both donors, depicted in the act of meditation, originally directed their attention to the now lost subject of the center panel, which was presumably a heavenly vision brought about by their prayers and devotions.

The traces of such devotional work remain in the donatrix’s portrait despite the loss of the object of her focus. On the *prie-dieux* before her sits an opened book of hours. Such books were constant companions to the pious wealthy who desired to remake their souls and increase their chances of attaining heaven. Not only did books of hours organize the daily and seasonal rhythms of their owner’s prayers, they also provided meditational subjects designed to lead the reader along the

¹ Several authors have attempted to determine which family this donor belonged to but there is still some controversy over her identity. Many assign her lineage to the Vivaldi, a prominent Genoese families active in Bruges in the fifteenth century. For more on this matter, see: Lane B., “A Reconstructed Triptych with an Italian Motif”, *Art Bulletin* 52, 4 (1970) 390–393; *The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue* (Washington, D.C.: 1986) 49–55; *European Paintings: An Illustrated Catalogue. National Gallery of Art* (Washington, D.C.: 1985) 88; Upton J., *Petrus Christus. His Place in Fifteenth-Century Flemish Painting* (University Park: 1990) 84–87; Ainsworth M. – Martens M. (eds.), *Petrus Christus* (Gent – New York: 1994) 131–135; and *Virtue and Beauty: Leonardo’s Ginevra de’ Benci and Renaissance Portraits of Women*, *National Gallery of Art* (Washington, D.C.: 2001–2002) no. 14b; Hand J. – Wolff M. (eds.), *Early Netherlandish Painting* (New York: 1986).

² See: Lane, “A Reconstructed Triptych” *passim*.



Fig. 1. Petrus Christus, *Portrait of a Female Donor*, 1450.
Oil on panel, 41.8 cm x 21.6 cm. Washington D.C.,
National Gallery of Art (Samuel H. Kress Collection). Photo
Credit: National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

path to salvation. Petrus's tableau offers a clear relationship between the tools of ardent, prayerful meditation and any resulting visionary experience. For the artist and his clients, the use of books of hours, or images like this triptych, when paired with prayer and devotion, could and did lead to heavenly visions in one form or another.

This cause-effect relationship, however, does not explain every pious object in the image. What about the woodcut hanging on the wall? Are we to believe that it serves the same type of vision-inducing function as the book of hours? Thanks to the *Golden Legend*, fifteenth-century Christians were well aware of St. Elizabeth's propensity toward strong prayer and visions of heaven.³ The simple woodcut depicting her in the image, however, downplays these aspects of her hagiography. Elizabeth does not appear to witness any vision but, instead, stretches her arms out toward the viewer in what appears to be a simple *orans* gesture or a welcoming embrace. Rather than acting as a prompt for speculative meditation, then, the saint's presence in the portrait (as many art historians have argued) may be a simple reference to the donatrix's given name or merely a quotidian element recording the common contemporary practice of placing woodcuts and placards in private houses.

This explanation does not justify the relative prominence afforded the woodcut in the image. The print appears at the left edge of the panel where the artist clusters several important elements. Not only is the dontatrix depicted here, so too are the *prie-dieux*, the book of hours, and the heraldic shield. The woodcut is suspended among these elements in an area likely to draw the viewer's attention. Were it a "slice of life", why place the woodcut so prominently or, for that matter, include it at all? As a metonym, the woodcut's location near the donatrix's face makes sense. What better way to identify the woman pictured than to pair her with her name saint? This account, however, presents a nagging problem. The couple's contemporaries would certainly have known her name and would not have needed such prompting. Further, no such saintly namesake appears in the man's portrait. Why would viewers need this type of help remembering her name but not his? Rather than seeing the woodcut as an innocuous decoration, we must view it as another functional object among, and within, the

³ Jacob de Voragine, *The Golden Legend. Readings on the Saints*, trans. W. Granger Ryan, 2 vols (Princeton: 1993), vol. II, 302–318 ("Saint Elizabeth").

complex devotional aids Petrus represents. In this framework, the print draws attention to itself by depicting a popular saint. For fifteenth-century Christians, images of saints often worked as apotropaic objects offering aid and protection to those who viewed and/or owned them. Such aid and protection was necessary as the soul made its way along the path of salvation. In this paper, I argue that the inclusion of the woodcut of St. Elizabeth in Petrus's image provides insight into a type of religious practice that differs from the more speculative form of devotion that scholars normally discuss.

Modern scholarship on meditational images and meditational practice tends to privilege the more abstract and spiritually difficult aspects of the process of preparing the soul for salvation. Rather than focusing on these elements, I turn my attention to what I term 'practical devotion' – speculative devotion's little discussed, and largely invisible, companion. For the purposes of my discussion, I define practical devotion as the activation and employment of images, objects, and practices dedicated to keeping body and soul safe and secure as the individual struggled along the more mentally and spiritually demanding paths of salvation and redemption. Like its more speculative counterpart, this form of devotion was an act of free will that demonstrated the soul's desire to cooperate in God's plan of salvation.⁴ The employment of images and objects, and the practices that went with them, signaled the individual's desire to make use of the tools provided by God and the Church to aid in his soul's progress. In order to understand this type of devotion, I focus my discussion on one of its constituent elements, the concept of apotropaism. Broadly speaking, apotropaism is the process of averting evil or turning harm away from someone or something. The use of particular objects or images to avert evil – especially the "evil eye" – has its roots in antiquity.⁵ Modern scholars usually categorize apotropaism as a form of folk magic and lump it under the head-

⁴ My definition is based on Thomas Aquinas' discussion of the etymology of devotion – he states that it is from *devovere* (vow, dedicate, sacrifice) – in his *Summa*. See: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae Secunda Secundae Partis*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Oxford, 1927–1935), *Secunda Secundae Partis*, Question 82.

⁵ See, for example: Hildburgh H., "Apotropaism in Greek Vase-Painting", *Folklore* 57, 4 (1946) 154–178; idem, "Apotropaism in Greek Vase-Paintings (Continued)", *Folklore* 58, 1 (1947) 208–225; idem, "Images of the Human Hand as Amulets in Spain", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 18, 1/2 (1955) 67–89; and Callisen S., "The Evil Eye in Italian Art", *Art Bulletin*, 19, 3 (1937) 450–462.

ing of superstition. For fifteenth-century Christians, this was not the case. The term *supersticio* denoted an ‘irrational and improper religious practice’ that fell into the category of heterodoxy.⁶ The belief in the efficacy of saints’ images, the healing power of relics, the amuletic effects of stones and substances as a type of natural magic to ward off particular types of harm, and the power of formulaic prayers or sayings was neither heterodox nor irrational. For contemporary Christians, the reliance on such aid was highly rational and was rooted in the belief that these things worked because God allowed them to do so as part of his natural order.⁷ The Church certified the legitimacy of these beliefs by sanctioning various types of objects and practices that purported to protect the individual and ward off all manner of evil.

The concept of apotropaism gets at the ways in which practical devotion used the *quid pro quo* aspects of Christian soteriology (the theology of salvation) to provide solace, comfort, and aid to individual Christians in their daily lives.⁸ This is not to say, however, that fifteenth-century Christians saw a stark break between practical and speculative forms of devotion. The separation I propose is a matter of analytical convenience and is meant to help tease out a layer of devotion that usually operated in the background and acted as a constant, but transparent, companion to its more visible cousin. Rather than being the high-flown mental/spiritual meditation performed by ‘spiritual athletes’, practical meditation was the stuff of everyday protection used by those who were not in monasteries or convents, were not Tertiaries, were not in Beguine communities, and did not want to be among these self-proclaimed followers of a strict religious life. If speculative devotion was concerned with the ontological changes necessary to reform the soul and bring it into conformity with the will of God, practical devotion was concerned with the existential needs of survival as a precondition for that deeper work.⁹ Anyone could

⁶ Kieckhefer R., “The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic”, *American Historical Review* 99, 3 (1994) 813–836; Bailey M., “From Sorcery to Witchcraft: Clerical Conceptions of Magic in the Later Middle Ages”, *Speculum* 76, 4 (2001) 960–990.

⁷ Kieckhefer, “The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic” 814, 821; Bailey. “From Sorcery to Witchcraft” 965.

⁸ This article is an expansion of work I did in connection with my monograph on Geertgen tot Sint Jans. See: Decker J., *The Technology of Salvation and the Art of Geertgen tot Sint Jans* (London: 2009).

⁹ Decker, *The Technology of Salvation*. For an extended discussion of the ontological changes necessary for reforming the soul, see chapter 2 and 3.

practice this “automatic” form of devotion. Its primary function was to protect the practitioner and afford him time and security enough to see to the health of his soul.

One of the best-known Church-sanctioned practices involving an apotropaic element was that of the ‘ocular consumption’ of the Host.¹⁰ From the fourth Lateran Council (1215 C.E.) onward, Church statutes required all Christians to receive the Host physically at least once per year, usually at Easter.¹¹ Christians knew well the salvific properties that the Host offered but physical reception required the preparatory phases of public confession, penance, and absolution. The Church considered taking the Host without fulfilling these requirements as being “unworthy” and, per Pauline theology, taught the laity that such an act damned the soul rather than saving it. A few extremely pious people living conventional and quasi-conventional lives undertook confession weekly, or even daily, but for the majority yearly confession was the norm. This did not diminish the laity’s desire to take the Host and experience the positive benefits it offered, however. Rather than physically receiving it, the laity clamored to consume the Host ocularly though an *Augenkommunion* (‘communion of the eyes’).¹² This practice grew out of a series of synodal decrees, starting as early as the thirteenth century, in which the Church encouraged ‘spiritual communion’ as a reasonable substitute for physical communion.¹³ Prior to the portion of the Mass in which the priest elevated the Host, it was customary for churches to ring bells – sakering bells inside the church and tower bells outside it – to announce the pending miracle. The laity made a habit of entering churches just before the moment

¹⁰ For extended analyses of this phenomenon, see among others: Sinanoglou L., “The Christ Child as Sacrifice: A Medieval Tradition and the Corpus Christi Plays”, *Speculum*, 48, 3 (1973) 491–509; Scribner R., *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge: 1981); Lane B., “Sacred versus Profane in Early Netherlandish Painting”, *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 18, 3 (1988) 106–115; and Zika C., “Hosts, Processions and Pilgrimages: Controlling the Sacred in Fifteenth-Century Germany”, *Past and Present* 118 (1988) 25–64.

¹¹ Lea H.C., *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church* (Philadelphia: 1896) 2 vols.; Caspers C., “The Western Church During the Late Middle Ages: *Augenkommunion* or Popular Mysticism?”, in Caspers C. – Lukken G. – Rouwhorst G. (eds.), *Bread of Heaven. Customs and Practices Surrounding Holy Communion. Essays in the History of Liturgy and Culture* (2nd printing, Kampen: 1995) 83–98.

¹² Caspers, “The Western Church During the Late Middle Ages” *passim*.

¹³ Caspers, “The Western Church During the Late Middle Ages” 87–88.

of the elevation and then, having seen and consumed the Host visually, leaving for the next elevation at the nearest church.¹⁴ Not only did this habit satisfy the desire to see the risen and triumphant body of Christ in the form of the Eucharist, popular belief also held that it offered protection against sudden death for any who saw it. The fear of sudden death was a major concern for average Christians as it had the potential of short-circuiting one's salvation. A soul caught unprepared might not have time to confess, leaving it unshriven. Such a death was problematic; a sin-stained soul could not pass into Heaven.

Ocular consumption of the Host, and the protection it offered, was not limited to the Mass. Processions like Corpus Christi, or even the mini-procession of taking the *viaticum* (the Host offered in the Last Rights) to a dying parishioner offered the laity chances to see the Host and benefit from that sighting.¹⁵ Whenever a priest accompanied the Host outside the Church and through the city, it was an opportunity for the faithful to show their veneration to the body of Christ. While the elevated Host of the Mass offered a defense against unexpected death, processional sightings offered spiritual protection in the hereafter. One of the benefits of consuming the Host ocularily during a procession was that everyone who attended, and prayed a *Pater Noster* (Our Father) or an *Ave Maria* (Hail Mary) as the Host passed by, earned a small indulgence of a few days or a week.¹⁶ Such indulgences shortened the time a soul had to spend in Purgatory after death and could also provide a measure of *refrigerium* (refreshment) to those languishing in purgatorial fire.¹⁷ The prospect of shortening the soul's punishment, and hastening its reconciliation with God in heaven, led Christians to adopt a policy of amplification. If one indulgence was good, multiple indulgences in concert were better. In the case of Host processions, participants could increase the automatic benefit they received by performing prescribed actions. If an attendee had confessed and completed penance before the procession, he could earn a

¹⁴ Scribner, among others, notes that Protestant reformers criticized this practice and worked to dismantle it in their new confession. See: Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk*.

¹⁵ Caspers C., *De Eucharistische Vroomheid en het Feest van Sacramentsdag in de Nederlanden Tijdens de late Middeleeuwen* (Louvain: 1992).

¹⁶ Caspers, *De Eucharistische Vroomheid* 87–88. Caspers gives a list for several European sites stretching from Germany to France and offers these as examples of basic trends in the indulgences available by attending processions of the host.

¹⁷ Goff J. le, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Chicago: 1986).

forty-day indulgence.¹⁸ The extremely pious person, who accompanied the procession, bore torches and helped the priests and deacons, could add an additional thirty days to his time off Purgatory.¹⁹ This same helper could also earn twenty days for accompanying the host to the home of a sick person who desired the *viaticum*, and forty additional days if the procession went beyond the city's boundaries.²⁰ This system of exchange operated in a *quid pro quo* manner. The individual performed a particular act and, in return, gained a specified protection or benefit. The devotee exercised his free will when choosing to employ such actions but it was not the soul's desire that brought about each benefit, rather it was the wonder working power of the body of Christ that authorized each blessing.

It is difficult to know how nuanced, if at all, the average layperson's understanding of this exchange was. Theologians, however, expressed a deep understanding of the mechanics of salvation and discussed such *quid pro quo* relationships as being the result of God's innate goodness and justice. In order to shed more light on the subject, I turn to one of the most influential theologians in late-Medieval Christianity, Thomas Aquinas. In his *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas discussed the matter of effort and reward. For Thomas, *quid pro quo* exchanges were part of God's plan of salvation. Each soul could, and should, make the effort to cooperate with God and in doing so merited a reward. Aquinas notes that:

[...] a reward is something repaid to someone in return for work, as a sort of price paid for it. Thus just as the payment of the just price for goods received from someone is an act of justice, so too the payment of a reward for work is an act of justice.²¹

God, because he is just, rewards the efforts of the faithful. This did not mean, however, that human actions controlled God or that he was automatically obliged to obey human will. Aquinas made it clear that it was God's agency that was at play, not humankind's.

Since our actions have a meritorious character only on the presupposition of a divine ordination, it does not follow that God becomes simply

¹⁸ Caspers, *De Eucharistische Vroomheid* 87–88.

¹⁹ Caspers, *De Eucharistische Vroomheid* 87–88.

²⁰ Caspers, *De Eucharistische Vroomheid* 87–88.

²¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae. Prima Pars* Question 114,1.

obliged by debt to us but to himself, in the sense that an obligation of debt holds that his ordination should be fulfilled.²²

According to Aquinas, God condescends to abide by certain covenants between himself and his creation. The protection and aid promised during the Mass or processions was, in essence, a conditional contract. If the individual soul did what was expected of it in good faith and with good intent, God would reward its actions.²³ The practice of viewing the elevation of the Host and receiving protection from sudden death, or of saying a *Pater Noster* or an *Ave Maria* during a Host procession and earning a specific amount of time off from Purgatory, not only allowed Christians to participate in their own salvation it also gave them a chance to see to their own physical and spiritual protection. Further, these common practices provided a framework for similar exchanges outside the context of the Mass and Corpus Christi. The faithful routinely sought extra-liturgical promises of physical and spiritual help and protection. For fifteenth-century Christians, the ever-present cult of saints offered myriad opportunities to protect their lives and souls apotropaically through practical devotion.

The special status afforded to saints in Christianity placed them between God and humankind.²⁴ They acted as patrons, protectors, and intermediaries to whom the faithful could turn to for any number of needs. In some parts of Europe, in fact, it was common for Christians to request burial in the habit of an Order dedicated to a particular saint as a means of gaining that saint's patronage when the soul stood in judgment before God.²⁵ A rubric in an early fifteenth-century Flemish prayer book demonstrates the types of aid the laity hoped to receive from daily *quid pro quo* exchanges with the saints.

The good Saint George prayed this little prayer when he lived. Whoever takes this upon himself shall not die an unforeseen death. Nor shall he be cut down in battle, nor die in prison, nor drown in water, nor die accidentally on feast days, nor die without confession. [And] whoever reads this prayer over a woman who has gone into labor, the fruit [of

²² Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, *Prima Pars* 114,1.

²³ Decker, *The Technology of Salvation*. The soul's cooperation with God fell under the *dictum* 'facienti quod in se est, dues non denegat gratium' (if he does what is in him, God will not deny him grace). For a fuller explanation of this *dictum*, see chapter 2.

²⁴ See for example Brown P., *The Cult of Saints. Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: 1981).

²⁵ Eire C., *From Madrid to Purgatory: The Art and Craft of Dying in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Cambridge: 1995).

this labor] will not accidentally die, nor the mother. And in whatever house this little prayer is [found], it shall not be bothered by plague, nor thunder, nor lightning.²⁶

The broad range of protections promised in the rubric (centered mostly on avoiding various types of sudden death), as well as the guarantee that simply having the prayer in a home would safeguard it, addressed everyday anxieties. The rubric not only enumerates the multiple benefits offered simply by saying the prayer dedicated to St. George, it also underscores its efficacy by claiming that the saint availed himself of the prayer's apotropaic powers. A direct link between a prayer or formula and the saint authorizing it was critical. Images of saints paired with a specific text made this link explicit. With the rise of print technologies in the fifteenth-century, such image/text pairings put apotropaic prayers and images in easy reach of the average Christian.

The faithful routinely paired particular saints with specific types of aid and protection. Such specialization led Christians to associate St. Lucy with maladies of the eye and to believe that they could inoculate themselves against the hazards of the road and from water and tempests by carrying an image of St. Christopher with them.²⁷ A text paired with a woodcut depicting the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*, c. 1440–60, provides a clear example of this type of saintly specialization in connection with apotropaic image/text combinations.

Grant your supplicants who carry this prayer about with them, or have it installed in their homes, or have it in the memory of their hearts, and who will have gathered devoutly on the day of your feast that they will have refuge from the widespread, reknown [sic] pestilence. Through their confidence in your merits and prayers, deliver us from this plague and disease, and from all evil to come as well as from all dangers to the body and spirit, and from sudden unexpected death and all enemies visible and invisible every day, hour and moment through Christ the Lord.²⁸

Like the rubric preceding the prayer dedicated to St. George, this text states explicitly the benefits it offered. Among standard promises of

²⁶ Oosterman J.B., "Om de grote kracht der woorden. Middelnederlandse gebeden en rubrieken in het Brugge van de vroege vijftiende eeuw", in Meertens Th. (ed.), *Boeken voor de eeuwigheid. Middelnederlands geestelijk proza* (Amsterdam: 1993), quoted from London, British Library, Ms. Add. 39.638, fol. 3r.

²⁷ Farmer D. *Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (3rd ed., Oxford: 1992) 98.

²⁸ Field R., *Fifteenth Century Woodcuts and Metal Cuts From the National Gallery of Art. National Gallery of Art* (Washington, D.C.: 1965) catalogue number 244.

protection against sudden death, it offered specific assistance linked to the saint represented in the image above it. The faithful commonly acknowledge Sebastian's role as a plague saint and fervently invoked his aid and protection when a new outbreak of pestilence occurred. The image depicts the saint shot through with arrows as he undergoes the first part of his martyrdom. Sebastian's suffering is vital to his ability to offer such aid and comfort. In the process of imitating Christ and dying a martyr's death, the saint accrued merits and developed a treasury against which he could draw when approaching Christ on a supplicant's behalf. The text accompanying the image refers to these merits and offers them, along with Sebastian's prayers, as talismans that work apotropaically not only against the plague but also against all disease in general as well as unnamed 'dangers to the body and spirit'.

Fifteenth-century Christians saw their physical bodies and spiritual selves as vulnerable to various types of sickness. Plague affected the physical body but it was an underlying spiritual malady that made such a "corruption" possible.²⁹ The body/soul connection was not one way. The danger also existed that physical suffering could deform the soul through pain, hopelessness, and anger and push it toward apostasy. To no small degree this idea stemmed from the contemporary concept of the body as being composed of humors. The balance of these humors affected every organ in the body. Fifteenth-century theologians believed that the heart was the seat of the 'vital spirit' and helped constitute a person's soul. Any disease in the physical organ of the heart – brought about by an imbalance of humors – would cause potentially deleterious changes to the vital spirit produced in it and, hence, to the soul.³⁰ The text accompanying the image of Sebastian's martyrdom, in fact, testifies to the ubiquity of this heart/soul connection. It states that the faithful could experience and enjoy the benefits offered in the prayer

²⁹ This concept underlay patient treatment in contemporary hospitals. Upon entering the ward, patients were first confessed and shriven and only then could medical personnel treat them. See: Beaty N.L., *The Craft of Dying. A Study in the Literary Tradition of the Ars Moriendi in England* (New Haven: 1970); Hayum A., "The Meaning and Function of the Isenheim Altarpiece: The Hospital Context Revisited", *The Art Bulletin* 59, 4 (1977) 501–517; and Geus B. de – Heijden J. van der – Maat A. – Ouden D. den (eds.), *Een Scone Leeringe om Salich te Sterven. Een Middelnederlandse ars moriendi* (Utrecht: 1985).

³⁰ For more on this in the context of devotion and the formation of the soul, see: Decker, *The Technology of Salvation* chapter 2.

by having it ‘in the memory of their hearts’.³¹ The implication here is that imprinting the prayer on the physical substance comprising the heart changes that organ’s humoral complexion. As a result, the prayer has the potential ability to cause positive changes in the heart and, therefore, to the vital spirit flowing from it. Fifteenth-century Christians held as a truism that in order to protect the health of the body, one had to protect the health of his soul and vice versa. To that end, the faithful turned to spiritual treatment for maladies and even were able to ‘self medicate’.

Among the many apotropaic images and objects available to them, Early Modern Christians (especially in the Low Countries) employed a small, inexpensive print called a *slikprentje* (ingestible print) to protect their health and wellbeing.³² *Slikprentjes* were small woodcuts depicting various saints, the Virgin and Child, or sometimes verses from the Bible and were printed on large sheets of paper. The printmaker arranged the images in rows and delineated them with clear borders. The laity could purchase these sheets, often at pilgrimage sites, for a modest sum. Those suffering from illnesses clipped or tore off one of the images from the sheet and swallowed them to cure their ailments. The individual prints that made up the sheet constituted a sort of ‘pill cabinet’ to be used in times of sickness.

Whenever anyone in the family was sick, one clipped off one of the little prints, rolled it up and gave it to the patient to take with a sip of water. If the horse came up lame or the cow threatened to calf too soon, then one lay a little print between the hay, and if the chickens got coryza or the pigs the swine plague, then one mixed a little print with the feed.³³

For the faithful, the healing ability of paraphernalia such as *slikprentjes* offered a double benefit. It promised physical health for the buyer/user of the object as well as for his family and livestock. It also fortified his soul and bettered his chances of recovery by seeing to the spiritual side of his illness. Church dogma and the relentless efforts of popular preachers constantly reinforced the link between health and the soul. Those charged with the care of souls routinely taught that prayer,

³¹ The heart’s role in memory – as witnessed by the phrase ‘learned by heart’ – has its roots in antiquity. For more on the subject, see Carruthers M., *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: 1990).

³² Stille E., “Het slikprentje – een ‘heilige pil’”, *Image: medische beelddokumentatie* 39 (1970) 12–16.

³³ Stille, “Het slikprentje” 12.

proper veneration of the saints, and the Host were spiritual medicines that kept the soul healthy by treating the sins that threatened to drag it downward toward hell.³⁴ Further, if the individual did not have a healthy body and healthy soul, how could he hope to serve God fully and discharge his duty to the Creator?³⁵ By providing individual Christians, and the communities in which they lived, with a means of seeing to their spiritual and physical health, apotropaic objects like *slikrentjes* reinforced the *quid pro quo* nature of salvation (from disease or sin) and made it clear that the tools that God provided were panacea.

The *quid pro quo* aspects of the relationship between the devotee and the saint who granted favors via a wonder working object lays bare the at times mechanical nature of fifteenth-century Christianity. The use of such objects by the faithful points to a habit of mind that understood all of God's creation as being governed by a set of fixed rules and relationships. In effect, this system allowed Christians to see to their spiritual and physical needs by operating the machinery of the universe that God had provided them. Rather than being violations of the natural order, or heterodox forays into superstition or wizardry, apotropaic images and objects were powerful signs of God's continued participation in the lives of his creations and proof that he adhered to his covenants. Objects like *slikrentjes* were more than mere amulets against sickness and evil. They were constant reminders of the soul's debt to God and the necessity, and benefits, of conforming to his will.

Images of saints and *slikrentjes* offered protection and intercession on a limited scale. For more comprehensive protection and aid, the faithful turned to the Virgin Mary in her role as chief intercessor.³⁶

³⁴ Lettinck N., *Praten als Brugman. De wereld van een Nederlandse volksprediker aan het einde van de Middeleeuwen* (Hilversum: 1999) and Bangs P., *Een Handvol Wijscheden. Eenvoudig geloof in de vijftiende eeuw: de Spieghel ofte reghel der kersten ghelove.* (Nijmegen: 2000).

³⁵ See: Koorn F.W.J., "Hollandse nuchterheid? De houding van de Moderne Devoten tegenover vrouwenmystiek en-ascese," *Ons Geestelijk Erf* (March/June, 1992) 97–114. Koorn notes that Radewijnsz., for example, admonished the sisters of the common life under his care to maintain their physical strength in order to stay healthy enough to serve God with all their might.

³⁶ Thomas Aquinas said of the Virgin: 'She performed the works of all virtues whereas the saints exhibit particular ones, this one being humble, that one chaste, another merciful. Therefore they are given to us as examples of special virtues [...] But the Blessed Virgin is an example of all virtues'. Thomas Aquinas, "Exposition of the Angelic Salutation", in R. McIntrye (trans.), *Thomas Aquinas, Selected Writings* (London: 1998) 824.

Christian belief placed the Virgin above the other saints and directly below the godhead. As the mother of Christ and bride of God she had special power to sway Christ and, by virtue of her close connection to him during his Passion, she also exercised the status of co-redemptrix.³⁷ As a result, the cult of the Virgin had the most widespread following of all the saints' cults in the Middle Ages. An anonymous woodcut of the *Madonna as Protectress*, ca. 1470–1480, demonstrates the faith that Christians put in Mary as a patroness. The print shows naked souls, kneeling in prayer, sheltering under the Virgin's mantle. Its diminutive size (72 × 52 mm) made it extremely portable and it is likely that it was destined to be the sort of object that a votary carried on him as a means of reifying his dedication to the Virgin and as a touchstone reminding him to seek her aid in times of trouble. While there is no text associated with the image, its apotropaic element is clear – the Virgin receives all Christians under her protective mantle in exchange for their prayers and veneration. A more explicit example of the Virgin's ability to protect her clients comes in a woodcut of the *Maria in Sole*, ca. 1480. Unlike the *Madonna as Protectress*, this image of the Virgin is paired with a text detailing the exact benefits available to supplicants. The text is a prayer known as the *Ave Sanctissima*, attributed to Sixtus IV, which offers an indulgence for each time anyone prays it.³⁸

Our Holy Father pope Sixtus the fourth has given to all those who repent and confess their sins and who speak the following prayer with devotion – each time they pray it – eleven thousand years indulgence.

Blessed be thou holiest mother Mary, mother of God. You are the queen of heaven, you are the doorway to paradise, [and] you are the exceptional woman of the world. You are a pure maiden [and] you have conceived Jesus without sin. You have born the Creator and savior of the world, in whom I believe. Release me from all evil and pray for my sins. Amen.

Not only does the prayer promise eleven thousand years respite from time in Purgatory, it also implores the Virgin to use her considerable clout to expunge the devotee's sin and protect him from evil. Like the *Madonna as Protectress*, the *quid pro quo* relationship between the Virgin and her client is clear – proper devotion to the Virgin results

³⁷ Simson O. von, "Compassio and Co-redemtio in Rogier van der Weyden's *Descent from the Cross*", *Art Bulletin* 35, 1 (1953) 9–16.

³⁸ Ringbom S., "Maria in Sole and the Virgin of the Rosary", *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 25, 3/4 (1962) 326–330.

in her willingness to turn away evil and provide physical and spiritual protection.

By the late fifteenth century, any Christian who desired to establish a bond with the Virgin, and experience the benefits of her friendship and intercession, found a ready-made procedure in the Rosary. The Rosary, whose roots lay in late-classical and early-medieval prayer traditions, was a repetitive devotion comprised of ten *Ave Marias* followed by one *Pater Noster*.³⁹ By 1455, it was fairly common practice for Christians in the regions of Cologne and the Netherlands to recite 150 *Ave Marias* broken up into fifteen units of ten.⁴⁰ The combination of *Ave Marias*, punctuated by *Pater Nosters*, made this cycle easy to memorize and easy to use. Adherents kept track of the entire sequence by using a string of beads, often simply called a *Pater Noster*.⁴¹ By the 1470's, two brotherhoods – one founded in Douai by Alanus de Rupe and the other founded in Cologne by Jacob Sprenger – made this form of devotion ubiquitous. The Brotherhood of the Rosary spanned the social spectrum and taught all Christians the prayer cycle as a means of binding them to the Virgin and protecting their souls. In short, it disseminated a cult that promised aid and reward in exchange for performing a particular, formulaic act of devotion. The repetition of the prayer was critical as it worked following a principle of amplification similar to that of indulgences. If one pronouncement of the prayer cycle offered protection, multiple iterations would be more efficacious. In order to facilitate saying the cycle throughout the day, those who belonged to the confraternity wore their prayer beads (now commonly termed rosaries) at all times either around their waists, as was common in monastic practice, or around their necks or arms.⁴² The beads, and the prayers they stood for, disciplined the veneration that each adherent directed toward the Virgin and ensured proper performance of the cycle. For contemporary Christians, reciting the Roasary was an offering of a free-will effort, which the faithful hoped would gain

³⁹ For a good history of the development of the rosary, see Winston-Allen A., *Stories of the Rose. The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages* (Second Printing, Pennsylvania: 1998).

⁴⁰ Knippenberg W.H.Th., *Devotionalia. Religieuze voorwerpen uit het katholieke leven* (2nd edition, Eindhoven: 1985) (2 vols.) vol. I, 18, 20.

⁴¹ Knippenberg, *Devotionalia* I, 11. Knippenberg traces the beginnings of the use of beads or stones to count prayers in the western church to the eremites of the fourth century.

⁴² Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose* and Knippenberg, *Devotionalia*.

the protection that Mary could provide through her intercessory and co-redemptive powers.⁴³ The late fifteenth-century modification to the prayer of the Rosary in which the supplicant ends the *Ave Maria* with the phrase ‘pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our deaths’ illustrates this expectation.⁴⁴

The Virgin’s protection was not limited to the hour of death, however. A legend, circulated along with Sprenger’s statutes for the Brotherhood of the Rosary, demonstrates how proper devotion to Mary could protect the faithful in everyday life.⁴⁵ The story, titled “How the Rosary came to be” recounts the tale of a simple man in the habit of making a chaplet of flowers to honor an image of the Virgin. After becoming a lay brother in a religious order, the protagonist’s duties prevent him from making his accustomed gift and, because of this, he considers leaving his calling. He takes the matter to the prior of the cloister who convinces him to abandon making a physical wreath from flowers in exchange for a mental wreath comprised of *Ave Marias*. This substitution proves acceptable and he remains at his duties. One day, while on monastery business outside the cloister, the lay brother encounters thieves who wish to kill him in order to steal the monastery’s horse. As they creep up on the protagonist, the thieves have a vision of a beautiful woman plucking flowers from his mouth and weaving them into a chaplet. As the lay brother finishes his *Ave Marias*, the woman vanishes. The thieves seize the lay brother and demand to know who the woman is. It becomes clear to the thieves, as well as to the protagonist, that the woman was none other than the Virgin herself. Amazed, the thieves not only release the lay brother, they change their lives for the better and leave crime behind them. Like the promises made in the text of the print depicting St. Sebastian, or in the rubric introducing the prayer dedicated to St. George, this story shows how Christians saw the Rosary as means of automatically gaining physical and spiritual protection in exchange for their most basic devotional act – recitation of a rote prayer. In addition, the fact that votaries recited the prayer in Latin, which may have conjured associations with the Latin used in the

⁴³ Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose* 27–28.

⁴⁴ Knippenberg, *Devotionalia* 18.

⁴⁵ Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose* 100–101. Winston-Allen notes that the history of this type of story has its roots in the thirteenth century. For a full transcription of the tale, see *ibid.*

Mass, likely amplified the Rosary's amuletic properties in the minds of supplicants by casting it in a patently thaumaturgic light.

Fifteenth-century Christians saw the Rosary as a means of establishing a patron-client relationship with the Virgin and viewed her intercession as being an effective means of releasing them from the fear of hell and damnation. The Virgin's protection was powerful all on its own but, following the concept of amplification, the faithful sought to increase the Rosary's apotropaic strength. They did this by favoring prayer beads made out of particular materials and by adding supplemental objects to them. Rosary makers routinely made beads from a variety of things: bone or wood, for simple versions, to amber or jet for more expensive examples. Buyers routinely stipulated that craftsmen construct prayer beads from materials that purported to have apotropaic properties. Popular belief held, for example, that amber was an effective means of binding evil because it had an "attractive power", which helps explain its presence in the various *Pater Nosters* sold all over Europe.⁴⁶ In addition to amber, buyers also wanted beads made from rock crystal, a component normally used for making mirrors, because they believed it was a deterrent against the *maleficium* (evil deeds) of wizards and witches.⁴⁷ Bead makers also used stones like red jasper, as well as blood coral, to ward off various blood-related illnesses and as an aid, 'in general, against everything that threatened life'.⁴⁸

The faithful saw these materials as having the power to preserve, prolong, and aid life. If these properties weren't enough, the faithful could further supplement and amplify the apotropaic qualities of the beads by adding other "power objects" to them such as pendants, medallions from pilgrimage sites, and small crosses like the so-called Cross of St. Benedict, which claimed to offer protection against storms and accidents.⁴⁹ For believers, even the tasseled knot at the end of the strand had amuletic powers.⁵⁰ These additions made another automatic layer of protection available to devotees. The faithful believed that they gained specific spiritual and physical protections (e.g. safety

⁴⁶ Knippenberg, *Devotionalia*, 12. This 'attractive power' likely refers to the electrostatic properties of amber, which when rubbed develops a small negative charge that can 'attract' things like dust, paper, feathers, etc.

⁴⁷ Knippenberg, *Devotionalia* 12.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Knippenberg, *Devotionalia* 12–13.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

from evil, security against wizardry or other types of *maleficium*, and defense against storms, etc.) simply by possessing beads made of particular materials and incorporating them, along with pendant crosses and tassels, into a Rosary strand. Such benefits were a passive effect of wearing or carrying the “amplified” strand and, like having the prayer dedicated to St. George in one’s home, worked whether or not the votary was actively praying the Rosary. This dual benefit made even the simplest strand attractive to the laity, who necessarily had to concern themselves with the realities of everyday life and who, because of those responsibilities, had little time to dedicate to active prayer or more speculative forms of devotion.

As a result of this, prayer beads were popular consumer items and Christians not only bought strands for themselves, they also bought rosaries (or *Pater Nosters*) as gifts for others. Margaret of Flanders, Duchess of Burgundy, made a habit of buying various types of prayer beads for herself and her courtiers. A 1405 inventory shows that she possessed 103 *Pater Nosters* made of amber, 64 made of blood coral, and 56 made of agate.⁵¹ Previous scholars have viewed Margaret’s collection in terms of court couture and have implied that the variety of materials, as well as the sheer number of strands, indicates that these prayer beads were little more than ‘fashion accessories’ for the well to do.⁵² Rather than viewing Margaret’s purchases in this manner, I offer an alternative explanation. As Duchess, Margaret was both patroness and protectress for her courtiers. Noblewomen like the Duchess looked to the Virgin as an example of how to carry out these, and other, duties within their own social contexts. Margaret’s gifts of such apotropaic objects not only relied on the Virgin’s intercessory and co-redemptive agency, they were also extensions of her own (Marian) duties as patroness and protectress to her court. By giving prayer beads to her clients, the Duchess displayed her own piety and, at the same time, cultivated Marian veneration as a courtly virtue among her retinue. Further, her gifts positioned her between the Virgin and the court and in doing so reified her own status as patron. The various types of materials comprising the strands she bought not only reflected the social status of the person receiving the gift (i.e. more costly materials went to more influential courtiers) they also offered different types

⁵¹ Knippenberg, *Devotionalia* 12.

⁵² Ibid.

of apotropaic benefits. The Virgin's power and status authorized any assistance flowing to the recipient, but Margaret's choice of materials helped to determine the exact nature of those benefits.

To be sure, the use of apotropaic materials, as well as the process of choosing and combining them carefully, was not solely the concern of the Burgundian nobility and it was not restricted to the Rosary. Peasants, artisans, merchants, and the bourgeoisie availed themselves of these, and other, protective materials in contexts beyond Marian devotion. Petrus Christus's painting of *A Goldsmith in his Shop*, 1449 [Fig. 2], shows that the painter and his clients were familiar with this subject. The image depicts the interior of a contemporary goldsmith's shop in which the smith, who many scholars have identified as St. Eloy of Noyon, patron saint of goldsmiths, transacts business with two well-dressed clients.⁵³ Whether or not the smith is Eloy, scholars view the setting in which he works as a convincing representation of a typical goldsmith's or jeweler's shop active in fifteenth-century Bruges or Antwerp. As such, the image acts as a "vocational portrait" not only for the particular smith depicted but also for all contemporary goldsmiths and jewelers.⁵⁴ The panel may have hung in the goldsmith's chapel in Antwerp or in a communal house used by the goldsmith's guild in Bruges. It may also have been commissioned to hang in a particular goldsmith's booth. In any event, the image likely functioned as an advertisement directed toward a broad cross section of the public who was interested in the types of wares depicted in the painting.⁵⁵

Three figures stand in the shop, ostensibly engaged in the purchase of the ring sitting in the scales the smith holds. To the right of the figures is an open niche containing not only the various wares for sale in the booth but also some of the raw materials from which they are made. Presentation vessels, crafted in pewter, line the upper part of the

⁵³ This identification was made primarily on the basis of a halo around the smith's head. Analysis has shown that the halo was a later edition, which has called the identification of this figure into question. The most recent argument identifies the smith as the Bruges goldsmith Willem van Vleuten. For more on the debate, see: Schabacker P., "Petrus Christus' *Saint Eloy*: Problems of Provenance, Sources and Meaning", *Art Quarterly* 35 (1972) 103–120; Ainsworth – Martens, *Petrus Christus* 96–100; and Velden H. van de, "Defrocking St. Eloy: Petrus Christus's 'Vocational Portrait of a Goldsmith'", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 26, 4 (1998) 243–276.

⁵⁴ Velden, "Defrocking St. Eloy".

⁵⁵ Ibid. 261. Van de Velden offers this possibility as a means of shifting the discussion away from a more sacred/devotional reading of the panel.



Fig. 2. Petrus Christus, *Goldsmith in His Shop* (formerly titled *St. Eligius*), 1449. Oil on panel, 98 cm × 85 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Robert Lehman Collection). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

alcove. Various rings and broaches as well as a crystal Host container, topped in gold, populate the bottom half. A belt buckle and a string of prayer beads, made from various materials, hang from the shelf separating the two levels. Raw crystal, stone (likely a red jasper), and coral, as well as loose pearls and gemstones, stand on display in the lower half of the niche. The artist draws the viewer's attention to these objects by placing them between a cup made from a coconut, on the left, and the crystal Host container, and a display case for rings, on the

right. Petrus further draws attention to the importance of these objects by setting them against a stark white background, emphasizing their colors and shapes, and by arranging these elements at the same level as the smith's head, encouraging the viewer to make a link between the artisan and his materials and products. Contemporary viewers would have been well aware of the apotropaic properties of the unworked coral, stone, and crystal depicted on the lower shelf. Christians would have seen any finished work containing these materials as both an ornament and also as a talisman.⁵⁶ The rings on display, for example, contain precious and semi-precious stones that purported to impart various forms of protection to the wearer. The *Pater Noster* hanging from the shelf contains beads made from rock crystal, amber, jasper, and blood coral. The combination of so many materials, in theory, amplified the individual protections each offered making this *Pater Noster* a 'super strand' that could claim to preserve the wearer against demonic evil, the *maleficium* of witches and wizards, and blood diseases as well as anything that threatened life. Two items near the *Pater Noster*, the cup made from a coconut and a pair of petrified shark's teeth hanging between the beads and the branch of raw coral, index its life-preserving properties. Fifteenth-century Christians believed that the coconut was an antidote against poison and that the shark's teeth (also called *slangentongen*, or snakes tongues) could detect poison when submerged in a liquid containing it.⁵⁷ Like the coral beads in the *Pater Noster*, these items purported to keep the user safe from harm and prevent him from dying prematurely (i.e. without proper preparations). The grouping of *Pater Noster*, rings, raw materials, and objects for combating poison creates a tableau offering spiritual and physical protections to anyone who chooses to employ them.

Petrus's *A Goldsmith in his Shop* predates his *Portrait of a Female Donor* and demonstrates his awareness of, and familiarity with, the concept of apotropaism. Not only did he include talismanic materials and objects, he drew attention to them in both works by placing them near prominent elements in his composition that were sure to attract the viewer's gaze. Another of his paintings titled *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1450–60 [Fig. 3], demonstrates that this maneuver was

⁵⁶ Smith H., "The Legend of S. Eloy and S. Godberta, by Petrus Christus", *Burlington Magazine* 25, 138 (1914) 326–335.

⁵⁷ Ainsworth – Martens, *Petrus Christus* 98; and Smith, "The Legend of S. Eloy".



Fig. 3. Petrus Christus, *Portrait of a Young Man*, 1450–1460. Oil on panel, 35.4 cm × 26 cm. London, National Gallery (Salting Bequest). Photo Credit: National Gallery, London/ Art Resource, NY.

not isolated to *A Goldsmith in his Shop* or the *Portrait of a Female Donor*. The image presents a well-dressed young man holding an open book of hours as he performs an act of meditation. Like the *Portrait of a Female Donor*, the object of his devotion is no longer extant. On the wall behind him, the artist depicts a devotional print that pairs an image of the holy face with the text of the *Salve sancta facies*, which was a prayer attributed to Pope John XXII. In the fourteenth century, saying the prayer before Veronica's *sudarium* would net Christians a forty-day indulgence and by the fifteenth century, thanks to Pope Innocent IV, the faithful expected an indulgence of ten thousand days for their efforts.⁵⁸ Contemporary Christians, like the man depicted in Petrus's panel, hoped to gain a generous indulgence by pairing an image of the holy face – ostensibly derived from the original in Rome – with the prayer. It was of little consequence that the icon on the placard was not the original *sudarium*. Like the *Maria in Sole* or the *Martyrdom of St. Sebastian*, the combination of a sacred image with a text promising aid and protection was enough to qualify it as an apotropaic object.

Each of these images – the *Portrait of a Female Donor*, *A Goldsmith in his Shop*, and the *Portrait of a Young Man* – depicts a variety of the apotropaic objects that fifteenth-century Christians used for practical devotion. Not only could the faithful combine various objects and materials in a number of ways, as *A Goldsmith in his Shop* demonstrates, they could also blend various practices, such as devotion to the Virgin, the invocation of indulgence-bearing prayers, and even the ingestion of particular prints, in order to gain succor against daily concerns over physical and spiritual harm. These items and practices are not the primary focus of these images, however. They are, instead, almost invisible accompaniments to the main devotional or moral/ ethical thrust of each panel. Unlike the prayer books depicted in the *Portrait of a Female Donor* and the *Portrait of a Young Man*, for example, the apotropaic objects in these panels work literally and figuratively in the background as a support to the more mentally and spiritually demanding speculative devotion each figure practices. In the case of *A Goldsmith in his Shop*, the objects in the niche not only identify the location as a goldsmith's or jeweler's stall, they also

⁵⁸ Hand J., "Salve sancta facies: Some Thoughts on the Iconography of the 'Head of Christ' by Petrus Christus", *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 27 (1992) 7–18.

provide a protective backdrop for the still enigmatic interaction taking place between the figures.

The representations of apotropaic objects in these images act on a dual level. The prints, stones, beads, and prayers depicted in each panel are not just available to the sitter, or sitters, portrayed in the image but are accessible for the viewer as well. In the case of patently devotional images like the *Portrait of a Young Man* or the *Portrait of a Female Donor*, this dual availability poses some interesting questions. If an image like the woodcut of St. Elizabeth in the *Portrait of a Female Donor* acts apotropaically, whom does it protect? Is the aid offered by the saint's image, and the indecipherable text accompanying it, directed only toward the donatrix or does it redound to any viewer? Does the fact that it is a representation of a woodcut and not the woodcut itself make it any less effective as a charm against evil? If not, what does that imply for an image like *A Goldsmith in his Shop* that represents multiple types of protective materials? Did simply owning such an image extend an amplified form of aid to the owner and act like the super strand hanging from the shelf in the smith's shop? Last, if the main work of images like the *Portrait of a Female Donor* is to facilitate speculative devotion, might the inclusion of apotropaic elements like the print of St. Elizabeth provide a layer of protection while the viewer (whether or not s/he is the person depicted) does the spiritual work involved in deep meditation? The answers to most of these would take me beyond the space available for this paper. I would like to close my study, however, with putative answers to two of the questions I have posed. Specifically, I will examine briefly the questions of whether or not a representation of an apotropaic item was as effective as the actual object and how, if at all, the image of St. Elizabeth may have aided the donatrix in the *Portrait of a Female Donor* as she performed her speculative meditations. The remaining questions will have to wait for further analysis.

Scholars have argued that fifteenth-century Christians used a wide range of surrogates in their devotional work.⁵⁹ The faithful, for example, not only could substitute trips to local shrines for distant and dangerous pilgrimage locales, they could also opt for a mental replication

⁵⁹ Gelfand L. – Gibson W., "Surrogate Selves: The 'Rolin Madonna' and the Late-Medieval Devotional Portrait", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, 29, 3/4 (2002) 119–138.

of the more treacherous pilgrimage and gain all the benefits available to those who made the physical journey. Christians who, for various reasons, were unable to pray a particular prayer cycle, but who wanted the indulgence or other boon it offered, could enlist proxies to pray it for them. In some cases, wealthy patrons commissioned effigies of themselves and had those doppelgangers sent to particular sites to act as stand-ins that collected the blessings offered there in perpetuity.⁶⁰ In short, there appears to have been no deep division between a person (or object) and his (or its) representation when spiritual benefits were at stake. This certainly seems to be the case with the Holy Face included in the *Portrait of a Young Man*, which because of its pairing with the *Salve sancta facies*, and its reference to contemporary belief and practice, claims to offer ten thousand days relief from Purgatory. Based on this, I argue that the donatrix of Petrus's *Portrait of a Female Donor* likely would have seen the woodcut of St. Elizabeth depicted in the image as being just as efficacious as any "real" version she may have owned. This notion is further born out when we consider that less tangible representations of prayers or images – those imprinted on the heart for example – purported to offer the same protections and benefits as their more tangible counterparts. This state of affairs raises a related set of questions about the status of painting in the period and the role of painters as *artifex* or even "new natures", which I cannot begin to unravel here.

For the donatrix of Petrus's panel, the woodcut of St. Elizabeth offered aid and protection as she worked at devotions designed to bring about the type of vision played out in the now missing center panel.⁶¹ In the image, the donatrix's prayerful gesture, her open book of hours, and her gaze each point toward the object of her desire. She practices a speculative form of devotion, which she focuses through her book of hours; the woodcut plays no obvious role in her actions. For the "real" donatrix, the triptych itself was a vital part of directing her devotional work toward a higher end. The simulated woodcut of a popular saint likely had little to do with the narrative in the center panel. For the patroness, its presence in the image provided an object that connected

⁶⁰ Gelfand – Gibson, "Surrogate Selves" 132–133.

⁶¹ For a discussion of the relationship between donors and the desire to experience the types of visions depicted with them, see Harbison C., "Visions and Meditations in Early Flemish Painting", *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 15, 2 (1985) 87–118.

her with a helpful saint and offered her protection as she struggled along the difficult path to salvation. Christians associated Elizabeth with deep prayer and with visions of the divine. They also counted on her for miraculous cures, including resurrection from unexpected or bad deaths. In de Voragine's hagiography of the saint in his *Golden Legend*, he notes four separate miracles involving Elizabeth's ability to reanimate the dead. As the rubric introducing the prayer to St. George, the prayer accompanying the woodcut of St. Sebastian, and the prayer of the Rosary demonstrate, fifteenth-century Christians viewed any patron who could revive body and soul, and provide the supplicant time to prepare for death properly, as a powerful ally. For the donatrix depicted in Petrus's image, the simulated woodcut of Elizabeth of Hungary provided a powerful apotropaic against physical death and the spiritual harm that it could cause. Speculative devotion was difficult, time-consuming, and it was never guaranteed that the votary would experience visions of heaven or make demonstrable spiritual progress. Practical devotion, even that involving simulated versions of apotropaic objects, provided the faithful with promises of automatic aid and protection that they could employ as they worked to remake their souls while living their everyday lives.

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HIGHWAYS TO HEAVEN (AND HELL): WAYSIDE CROSSES AND THE MAKING OF LATE MEDIEVAL LANDSCAPE

Achim Timmermann

Sometime in the early 1780s Johann Michael Füssel, Protestant theologian and *Hofmeister* at the court of Ansbach, undertook a journey from Franconia into neighbouring Egerland in western Bohemia. On making his way from Eger (now Cheb) to Karlsbad (now Karlovy Vary), he is nonplussed by the extraordinary number of wayside crosses – what he calls ‘Catholic commemorative columns’ – that dot the countryside, and in front of which other travellers perform ‘almost heathenish’ devotional acts – they kneel and bow their heads, and fervently pray their rosaries. Counting an average of 48 crosses per square mile, and multiplying this number with that of the total surface area of Bohemia (909 square miles), Füssel calculates that this country alone must boast at least 43,632 such rural monuments, and, impressed with his own computation, exclaims, ‘What astonishing number!’.¹ Though his estimate was probably a somewhat exaggerated product of the vicissitudes of statistics, Füssel may not have been that far off the mark. Even today, the number of wayside crosses is staggering. The French Massif Central region preserves at least 300 erected before the mid-sixteenth century, while in Lower Austria and Carinthia another 200 survive

¹ Füssel, Johann Michael, *Unser Tagebuch oder Erfahrungen und Bemerkungen eines Hofmeisters und seiner Zöglinge auf einer Reise durch einen großen Theil des Fränkischen Kreises nach Carlsbad und durch Bayern und Passau nach Linz*, 3 vols. (Erlangen, Johann Jakob Palm: 1787–1791) vol. I 222–223: ‘Bishierher zählte ich, von Eger an gerechnet, 24 Crucifixsäulen, Marien- und Heiligenbilder und andere solche katholische Denksäulen. Wenn man eine Meile an die andere rechnet, so sind ihrer in einer Quadratmeile 48. Da nun Böhmen 909 Quadratmeilen im Umfang hat, so sind in diesem Lande wenigstens 43,632 solche Säulen. Welche erstaunliche Menge! [...] Man muß sich wundern, wenn man Katholiken vor einer leblosen Säule, vor einem Stück Holz oder Stein, mit der größten Ehrfurcht niederfallen sieht. Man kann diesen Gottesdienst des Pöbels, von der Seite betrachtet, beinahe mit dem Heidenthum vergleichen. Wir begegneten Reisenden, die vor solchen Bildern, wenn sie gleich noch fern von ihnen waren, ihre Köpfe entblößten, vor ihnen wohl auch niederfielen und vor lauter Eifer, ihren Rosenkranz abzubeten, uns gar nicht bemerkten’.

that date to the same period.² The number of extant wayside crosses put up between ca. 1550 and today, not just through the entire length and width of Christian Europe, but also in Spain's and Portugal's former colonies in central and south America, the Caribbean, west Africa and western and southern India, is almost incalculable, amounting to hundreds of thousands. A visual record of the sheer ubiquity of these monuments is provided in a woodcut of 1530 depicting the entry of Emperor Charles V into Munich.³ On the left side of the image can be seen at least six crosses marking the roads leading in and out of the city in an area of probably no more than 300 square metres (highlighted in [Fig. 1] by small arrows).

Erected in ever-larger numbers from the late thirteenth century onwards, wayside crosses constituted the largest network of public images and monuments of the late medieval world. Not only were they everywhere, they were also seen – and interacted with – by nearly everyone, because large sections of the populace were constantly on the move: noblemen travelled between seasonal residences, merchants and peddlers from town to town, peasants journeyed to local markets, and pilgrims to local, regional and international shrines.⁴ Given their visual ubiquity and centrality in the organization of late medieval life – for they carried an entire spectrum of religious, folkloric and

² Estimates based on a survey of the relevant inventories: Baudoin J., *Les croix du Massif central*, L'Encyclopédie du Massif central (Nonette: 1989); Benesch E. (ed.), *Dehio Niederösterreich, nördlich der Donau* (Vienna: 1990); Aichinger-Rosenberger P. (ed.), *Dehio Niederösterreich, südlich der Donau* (Vienna: 2003).

³ Geisberg M., *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1500–1550*, ed. W.L. Strauss, 4 vols. (New York: 1974) vol. I, nos. 292–296.

⁴ On late medieval travel and mobility in general, see Schlesier R. (ed.), *Mobility and Travel in the Mediterranean from Antiquity to the Middle Ages* (Münster: 2004); Strzelczyk J., *Średniowieczny obraz świata*, Wznowienia 18 (Poznań: 2004); Verdon J., *Travel in the Middle Ages* (Notre Dame, IN: 2003); Reichert F., *Erfahrung der Welt: Reisen und Kulturgegung im späten Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: 2001); Webb D., *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in the Medieval West*, The International Library of Historical Studies 12 (London – New York: 1999); Erfen I. (ed.), *Fremdheit und Reisen im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: 1997); Kraak D., *Monumentale Zeugnisse der spätmittelalterlichen Adelsreise: Inschriften und Graffiti des 14.–16. Jahrhunderts*, Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse 3, 224 (Göttingen: 1997); Wunderli P. (ed.), *Reisen in reale und mythische Ferne: Reiseliteratur im Mittelalter und Renaissance*, Studia humaniora 22 (Düsseldorf: 1993); von Ertzdorff X. (ed.), *Reisen und Reiseliteratur im Mittelalter und der Frühen Neuzeit*, Chloe: Beihefte zum Daphnis 13 (Amsterdam – Atlanta, GA: 1992); Ohlen N., *The Medieval Traveller* (Woodbridge: 1989); Wade Labarge M., *Medieval Travellers* (New York: 1983). Still useful and also a good read is Jusserand J.J., *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages* (London: 1889), with numerous subsequent and revised editions.

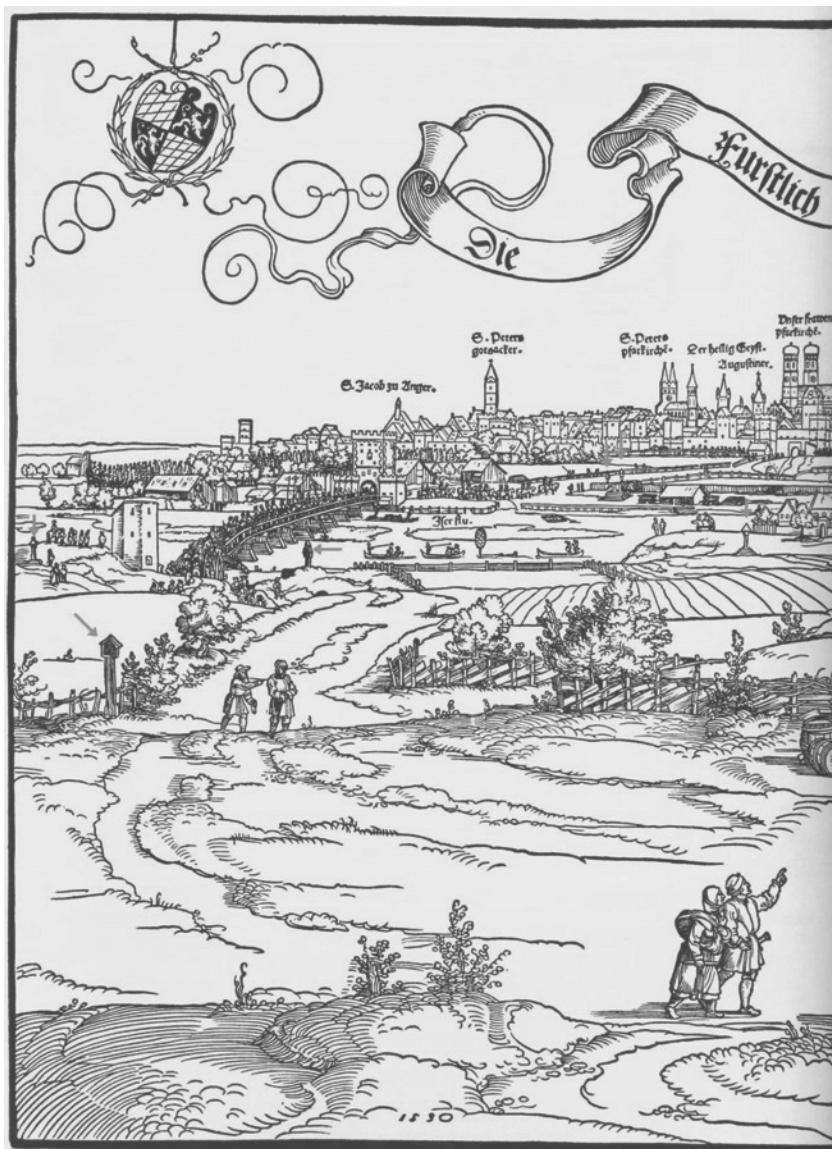


Fig. 1. Anon. *Entry of Charles V into Munich*, detail (1530). Woodcut.
Photo: Trustees of the British Museum.

judicial beliefs – it is indeed surprising to find that wayside crosses have to date almost completely been ignored by historians of medieval art and visual culture, even though they have been studied extensively by scholars from other disciplines – most notably ethnographers – for the past one hundred and fifty years.⁵

⁵ The corpus of publications by ethnographers, anthropologists, conservationists and folklorists is vast; only some of the most recent or important titles on central and northern European wayside crosses are cited in this note. To facilitate their use, they are arranged here according to the geographical areas they cover. 1. Austria – general studies: Brandstätter C. – Schaumberger H. (eds.), *Bildstöcke, Wegekreuze und Kapellen: Bildzeugnisse österreichischer Kultur* (Vienna: 1988); Hula F., *Die Totenleuchten und Bildstöcke Österreichs: Ein Einblick in ihren Ursprung, ihr Wesen und ihre stilistische Entwicklung* (Vienna: 1948); 2. Austria and Slovenia – Carinthia: Farthofer F., *Die Bildstöcke Kärtents* (Klagenfurt: 1991); Gutterer M., *Flurdenkmale in Kärnten: Wegekreuze und Bildstöcke* (Klagenfurt: 1991); Skudnigg E., *Bildstöcke und Totenleuchten in Kärnten, Kärntner Heimatreben 15* (Klagenfurt: 1967); 3. Austria – Lower Austria and Vienna: Altmann F., *Bildstöcke im Weinviertel*, Das Weinviertel 8 (Mistelbach: 1984); Lindner G. (ed.), *Kleindenkmäler: Bildstöcke, Breitpfiler, Grenzmarken, Heiligenfiguren, Kapellen, Kreuze, Marterln, Säulen, Denkmalpflege in Niederösterreich 2* (Vienna: 1987); Schneeweis E., *Bildstöcke in Niederösterreich* (Vienna: 1981); Westerhoff W., *Bildstöcke in Wien* (St. Pölten: 1993); Westerhoff W., *Kremser Miniaturen: Bildstöcke, Inschriften, Reliefs* (St. Pölten: 1995); 4. Austria – Styria: Heppner H., *Bildstöcke in der Steiermark* (Gleisdorf: 1984); 5. Austria and Italy – Tyrol and South Tyrol: Auer W., *Bildstöcke und Wegzeichen in Tirol* (Innsbruck: 1990); Weingartner J., *Tiroler Bildstöcke* (Vienna: 1948); Wieninger E., *O Mensch beden die Ewigkeit: Bildstöcke, Marterln, Votivbilder, Grabinschriften und Haustafeln in Südtirol* (Bolzano: 1976); 6. Czech and Slovak Republics: Urfus V., *Kamenné kříže Čech a Moravy* (Prague: 2001); Von Dreyhausen W., *Die alten Steinkreuze in Böhmen und Sudetengau*, Beiträge zur sudetendeutschen Volkskunde 24 (Leipzig: 1940); 7. Germany – Baden-Württemberg: Losch B., *Steinkreuze in Südwestdeutschland: Gestalt, Verbreitung, Geschichte und Bedeutung im volkstümlichen Leben*, Volksleben 19 (Tübingen: 1968); Losch B., *Sühne und Gedenken: Steinkreuze in Baden-Württemberg, ein Inventar*, Forschungen und Berichte zur Volkskunde in Baden-Württemberg IV (Stuttgart: 1981); Scholl W., *Zeugen der Zeit: Bildstöcke und Kreuze im Landkreis Rastatt* (Rastatt: 1985); 8. Germany – Bavaria: Brandstetter-Köran M., *Bildstöcke im Taubertal um Bad Mergentheim, Weikersheim und Creglingen* (Bergatreute: 2000); Dünninger J. – Treutwein K., *Bildstöcke in Franken* (Constance: 1970); Dünninger J. – Schemmel B., *Bildstöcke und Martern in Franken* (Würzburg: 1970); Koppelt H., *Bildstöcke und Steinkreuze im Landkreis Schweinfurt*, Mitteilungsblätter der deutschen Steinkreuzforschung 3 (Nuremberg: 1975); Mehl H., *Bildstöcke im nördlichen Unterfranken: Volkskundliche Untersuchung in den Landkreisen Hofheim, Bad Kissingen, Königshofen i. Gr., Mellrichstadt und Bad Neustadt* (Würzburg: 1969); Mehl H., *Fränkische Bildstöcke in Rhön und Grabfeld: Frommer Sinn und kulturelles Erbe* (Würzburg: 1978); Perseke F., *Bildstöcke: und ausgewählte Flur- und Kulturdenkmäler im ehemaligen Landkreis Alzenau* (Aschaffenburg: 2008); Pötzl W., *Kreuze, Bildstöcke und Feldkapellen*, Beiträge zur Heimatkunde des Landkreises Augsburg 16 (Augsburg: 1996); Schmidt J., *Bildstöcke, Flurkreuze, Flurdenkmale im Landkreis Aschaffenburg*, Veröffentlichungen des Geschichts- und Kunstvereins Aschaffenburg e.V. 28 (Aschaffenburg: 1988); Worschach W., *Bildstöcke an den Wegen durch Unterfranken* (Würzburg: 1994); 9. Germany – Hesse: Riebeling H., *Steinkreuze und Kreuzsteine in Hessen: Ein topographisches Handbuch*

This contribution presents the preliminary results of a larger-scale, interdisciplinary project that has occupied me for the past few years and that, a few more years down the line, will conclude with the publication of a book-length monograph. In the present study, I consider wayside crosses from two perspectives: first, as monuments that shaped the visual environment of fields, forests, vineyards, and, as in Fig. 1, of suburban countryside, investing these pieces of geography with meanings that had little to do with their actual form, and by doing so, created exterior or physical landscape;⁶ and second, as objects of

zur rechtlichen Volkskunde (Dossenheim: 1977); Schäfer F., *Bildstöcke im Odenwald*, Geschichtsblätter Kreis Bergstraße, Sonderband 20 (Lorsch: 1999); 10. Germany – Lower Rhine: Hacker-De Graaff R., *Wegekreuze im Bonner Raum* (Bonn: 1991); Rieth H., *Wegekreuze und Bildstöcke in Essen* (Eppenhain: 2005); Zingsheim C., *Wegekreuze und Bildstöcke in Köln* (Cologne: 1981); 11. Germany – Lower Saxony: Müller W. – Baumann G., *Kreuzsteine und Steinkreuze in Niedersachsen, Bremen und Hamburg: Vorhandene und verlorengegangene Rechtsdenkmale und Memorialsteine*, Forschungen der Denkmalpflege in Niedersachsen 5 (Hameln: 1988); 12. Germany – Middle Rhine: Müller-Veltin K., *Mittelrheinische Steinkreuze aus Basaltlava*, Jahrbuch des Rheinischen Vereins für Denkmalpflege und Landschaftsschutz, 1976–1977 (Neuss: 1980); Schüler H., *Wegekreuze und Heiligenhäuschen im Stadtkreis Koblenz* (Koblenz: 1977); 13. Germany – Rhineland-Palatinate and Saar: Becker B., *Wegekreuze im Saarpfalz-Kreis* (Homburg: 1993); Thinnies M., *Wegekreuze und Bildstöcke im Saarland* (Saarbrücken: 1985); 14. Germany – Thuringia: Storznér F., *Steinkreuze in Thüringen: Katalog der Bezirke Gera und Suhl*, Weimarer Monographien zur Ur- und Frühgeschichte 21 (Weimar: 1987); 15. Germany – Westphalia: Brockpähler W., *Steinkreuze in Westfalen*, Schriften der Volkskundlichen Kommission des Landschaftsverbandes Westfalen-Lippe 12 (Münster: 1963); *Dokumentation der Bildstöcke, Wegekreuze und Kapellen in der Stadt Salzkotten*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stadt Salzkotten 1 (Salzkotten: 1992); Heinrichsbauer E., *Kapellen, Wegekreuze und Bildstöcke auf dem alten Gebiet der Stadt Bottrop*, Beiträge zur Bottroper Geschichte 9 (Bottrop: 1985); 16. Poland: Janicka-Krzywda U., *Kapliczki i krzyże przydrożne polskiego podkarpackia* (Kraków: 1991); Milka J., *Kamienne pomniki średniowiecznego prawa* (Wrocław: 1979); Scheer A., *Krzyże pokutne ziemi świdnickiej* (Świdnica: 1987); Seweryn T., *Kapliczki i krzyże przydrożne w Polsce* (Warsaw: 1958); Zin W., *Opowieści o polskich kapliczach* (Wrocław: 1995); 17. Sweden: Schmeissner R.H., *Steinkreuze in Schweden: Ein Beitrag zur Denkalforschung in Schweden = Stenkors i Sverige: ett bidrag till minnesmärkesforskningen i Sverige*, Steinkreuzforschung A.3 (Regensburg: 1984). All of these titles have extensive bibliographies with references to individual monuments. In addition, wayside crosses also have a growing presence in cyberspace. One of the best searchable databases can be found at www.suehnkreuz.de, which is updated on an almost daily basis, and which features, among other things, maps and GPS-locations for each monument as well as extensive bibliographies.

⁶ My notion of “physical landscape” as a culturally-specific, man-made environment owes much to Denis Cosgrove’s classic study *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison: 1998²), in which he defines ‘landscape’ as, ‘a discourse through which identifiable social groups historically have framed themselves and their relations with both the land and with other human groups [...] [a] discourse [that] is closely related epistemically and technically to ways of seeing [...].’ I am also indebted

the homiletic, devotional and artistic imagination, in which these crosses helped constitute a kind of spiritual and allegorical landscape that had its own terrain of roads, mountains, lakes etc.⁷ Ultimately I wish to argue that as inhabited and traversed by their contemporary audiences, these landscapes intersected and formed a perceptual and immersive continuum – a continuum in which the visible world could become allegorical, movement through natural space became movement through redemptive space, and vice versa, and in which wayside crosses, both real and imaginary, were transformed into ‘heterotopian’ access portals to biblical places and temporalities. My argument revolves around, firstly, the wayside crosses themselves; secondly, an early-sixteenth century religious tract, Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg’s *Christenlich bilgerschafft*; and thirdly, around a series of images – woodcuts as well as paintings – created by Urs Graf, Hieronymus Bosch and other late medieval artists. Although the environments considered in this study continued to persist, with some permutations, well into the early modern and modern eras, I limit myself here to an analysis of the period between ca. 1300 and ca. 1600, during which wayside crosses first began to loom large in people’s everyday life and imagination, and in their various economies of Salvation.

Physical landscape: Wayside crosses – forms and functional topographies

It should be noted that the term “wayside cross”, which I use throughout this contribution, is a collective label for what was and is in fact a vast pool of formally divergent monuments. Depending on their geographical location, late medieval wayside crosses took four basic shapes, of which the cruciform was the most common. Cruciform crosses were found throughout western Europe, from northwestern

to Simon Schama’s *Landscape and Memory* (New York: 1995), which convincingly shows that individual historic landscapes, though long lost beneath a palimpsest of more recent actual and symbolic transformations of the natural environment, can in fact be “dug up” and “excavated”. Other important studies concerned with the “recovery” of specific landscapes include Warnke M., *Political Landscape: The Art History of Nature* (London: 1994); Lane B.C., *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality* (New York: 1988).

⁷ For the notion of spiritual or allegorical landscape, see Piehler P., *The Visionary Landscape: A Study in Medieval Allegory* (London: 1971).

Germany, the Low Countries and France, to Spain and Portugal and their colonies, and hundreds still survive today. A case in point is the so-called *Poppenbecker Memoriencruz* [Fig. 2], erected by the side of the road leading from Havixbeck to Billerbeck in western Westphalia. The monument, carved from Baumberg sandstone, marks the site where in 1487 a knight of Nienborg, Sweder von Bevern, fell from his horse and died, allegedly after having previously sustained severe wounds in a crusade against the Turks.⁸ Travelling further north and east, to Frisia, Lower Saxony, Holstein and the hinterlands of the Baltic, we encounter another cross design, resembling a stele or a tombstone, and often accentuated by a disk-shaped medallion carved with Passion imagery [Figs. 6 and 8]. The countryside of much of central and east central Europe, from Lotharingia to the Tatra mountains, was and is dominated by a third type of cross, the *Bildstock* or image-post, which is sometimes topped by a miniature roof, and which either displays sculptures [Figs. 22 and 24] or – as is especially common in the East and South Tyrol, Carinthia and Slovenia – painted scenes and figures, often executed by prominent itinerant artists [Figs. 5, 7, 23]. While types one to three were ubiquitous, the fourth and last category of cross, of turriform design and exceeding heights of ten or even fifteen metres, remained a relatively rare sight [Fig. 4]. In central Europe their construction was primarily associated with the great fourteenth- and fifteenth-century building lodges at the forefront of (micro-)architectural innovation, in particular Cologne, Nuremberg, Prague and Vienna.⁹ Whether these lofty miniature towers were inspired by the late thirteenth-century English Eleanor Crosses or indeed the even older Parisian Montjoies of St. Louis is still subject to an ongoing debate.

Depending on local context, wayside crosses assumed a variety of functions, and, as the following will show, the choice of formal type had little to do with what these structures were actually supposed to achieve. A considerable number of differently shaped crosses thus demarcated boundaries between a variety of possessions and domains, be they local, regional or national, ecclesiastical or seigneurial. Often communal rituals, known as the “beating of the bounds”, were enacted

⁸ Brockpähler, *Steinkreuze in Westfalen* 25. The cross featuring images of the deceased and St. James of Compostella, bears the inscription ‘Im Jahre 1487 auf Antoni Dach ist allhier Gehens Dodes Verstorben Swer von Beveren’.

⁹ See Timmermann A., *Real Presence: Sacrament Houses and the Body of Christ, c. 1270–1600*, Architectura Medii Aevi 4 (Turnhout: 2009), chapters 2 and 3, *passim*.



Fig. 2. [COL. PL. VIII] Poppenbeck (Westphalia), commemorative cross for Sweder von Bevern (1487). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

around these monuments, in which children took part and frequently had their ears tweaked (the ear being considered the seat of memory) – a mnemonic strategy that ensured that a specific cross was not regarded as a natural topographic feature, but recognized and acceded as having been set up by common consent.¹⁰ Among the oldest boundary markers to survive is the so-called *Lüdermünster Kreuz* in Hesse (1383), which consists of a cuboid socle and a cruciform upper part [Fig. 3].¹¹ Rising to nearly four metres in height, this cross marked the boundary between the bishopric of Fulda and the domains of the lords of Schlitz, the von Görz, well into the nineteenth century. Exactly contemporary with, though of much greater visual complexity than, the cross of Lüdermünd is the *Spinnerin am Kreuz* in Wiener Neustadt (Lower Austria), which was erected between 1382 and 1384 to commemorate the Neuburg Treaty of Separation (Neuburger Teilungsvertrag, 1379), in which the territorial claims of Albrecht III and Leopold III of Habsburg were finally settled [Fig. 4].¹² Designed by Master Michael, then Master of the Works at St. Stephen's in Vienna, the eighteen-metre monument soars in a dramatic succession of tapering storeys showcasing scenes from the Passion.

The routes of open-air processions (*Umgänge*) undertaken during the *annus liturgicus* were likewise determined and visualized by crosses. The so-called *Armsünderkreuz* of St. Stefan im Gailtal in Carinthia of ca. 1525, which features paintings from the shop of Urban Görtschacher, was thus visited every Sunday before Mass in the nearby parish church of St. Stephen, as well as on the feast day of St. Florian (May 4th), on Ascension Day, Corpus Christi and its octave, and on May 31st during the annual field- and weather procession [Fig. 5]. Frequently, an *Umgang* could culminate in the celebration of Mass *en plain air*, or else, in the blessing of farmed produce – this in turn necessitated the placement of temporary or permanent altars before the crosses involved. Such altars, here made of stone, still distinguish

¹⁰ Warncke, *Political Landscape* 17.

¹¹ Mösslinger K.F., "Das Hemmer Kreuz bei Fulda", *Das Steinkreuz* 7 (1939) 18–20; Azzola F.K., "Eine ikonographische Besonderheit auf Steinkreuzen in Hessen und Siebenbürgen", *Südost-Forschungen* 27 (1968) 308–314; Riebeling, *Steinkreuze und Kreuzsteine*, 125–126; Willms G., "Lüdermünster Kreuz: Grenz- und Friedensmal", *Buchenblätter* 7 (1981) 25–26.

¹² Hassmann E., *Meister Michael: Baumeister der Herzöge von Österreich* (Vienna: 2002) 117–130, with further literature; Brucher G., *Gotische Baukunst in Österreich* (Salzburg – Vienna: 1990) 130. Cf. also Timmermann, *Real Presence* 65–66.



Fig. 3. Lüdermünd (Hessen), boundary cross (1383).
Photo: Achim Timmermann.



Fig. 4. Wiener Neustadt, Lower Austria, *Spinnerin am Kreuz* (1382–1384).
Photo: Achim Timmermann.



Fig. 5. [COL. PL. IX] St. Stefan im Gailtal (Carinthia, A), *Armsünderkreuz* (ca. 1525). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

the *Prozessionsbildstöcke* of ca. 1500 that mark four the village exits of Eggolsheim in Franconia.¹³

Trajectories of a different kind, often extending over hundreds of miles, were delineated by pilgrimage crosses such as the *Klever-schusskreuz* in the Roeckstraße in Lübeck [Fig. 6]. Fashioned as a *Scheibenkreuz* or disk cross, this monument was commissioned in 1436 by Johann von der Heyde, an affluent burgher of Lübeck, and stands by the road to the church of the three bleeding ‘wonder hosts’ in Wilsnack, Mecklenburg.¹⁴ This road was of particular importance for pilgrims from Scandinavia, who would arrive in Lübeck by ship, and from there travel onwards to the Heiligblutkirche in Wilsnack. Another important pilgrimage cross has survived in Virgen in the East Tyrol, in the shadow of the Felbertauern range [Fig. 7].¹⁵ Shaped as a *Bildstock* and dating to 1455, the Virgen cross originally formed part of a whole chain of monuments that guided travellers to the nearby shrine of Our Lady of the Snows at Obermauern. The cross is unique in that it preserves numerous pilgrims’ marks and inscriptions in red chalk from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, one of which reads ‘causa amore festu Jacobi 1500’. A second important feature of this cross is the stepped socle, which would have provided seating for communal meals. In some instances, a wayside cross could be put up at or near the pilgrimage site itself, as at Pfaffendorf in Franconia, where a late-fifteenth century *Bildstock* dedicated to St. Notburga was placed

¹³ Dünninger – Schemmel, *Bildstöcke und Martern in Franken* 168. The roofs that now protect the crosses date to the eighteenth century.

¹⁴ The erection of this cross is explicitly mentioned in von der Heyde’s will ('Item so will ick, dat man skal setten en Cruce van X Marken uppe de Wegschydinge alse gheyt to der Wilsnacke, dar sich die Wysmarsche Wech anhevet') and is inscribed 'biddet got vor / den ghewer / des wegnes na / der wilsnakke'. For this monument, see esp. Buddin F., "Mittelalterliche Gedenksteine im Ratzeburgischen", *Niedersachsen* 11 (1906) 146–148; Warnke J., "Mittelalterliche Pilgerzeichen aus Lübeck und Lauenburg", *Nordelbingen* 8 (1931) 159–183, at 159–161; Möller T., "Wilsnackkreuz in der Roeckstraße, Lübeck: Sühne- und Erinnerungsmale in Schleswig-Holstein", *Nordelbingen* 17–18 (1942) 99–101; Bernard K. (ed.), *Plastik in Lübeck: Dokumentation der Kunst im öffentlichen Raum (1436–1985)* (Lübeck: 1986), no. 1. On the cult and controversy of Wilsnack’s Holy Blood hosts, see now esp. Bynum C.W., *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond*, The Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: 2007).

¹⁵ *Dehio-Handbuch Tirol*, ed. G. Ammann, (Vienna: 1980) 845.

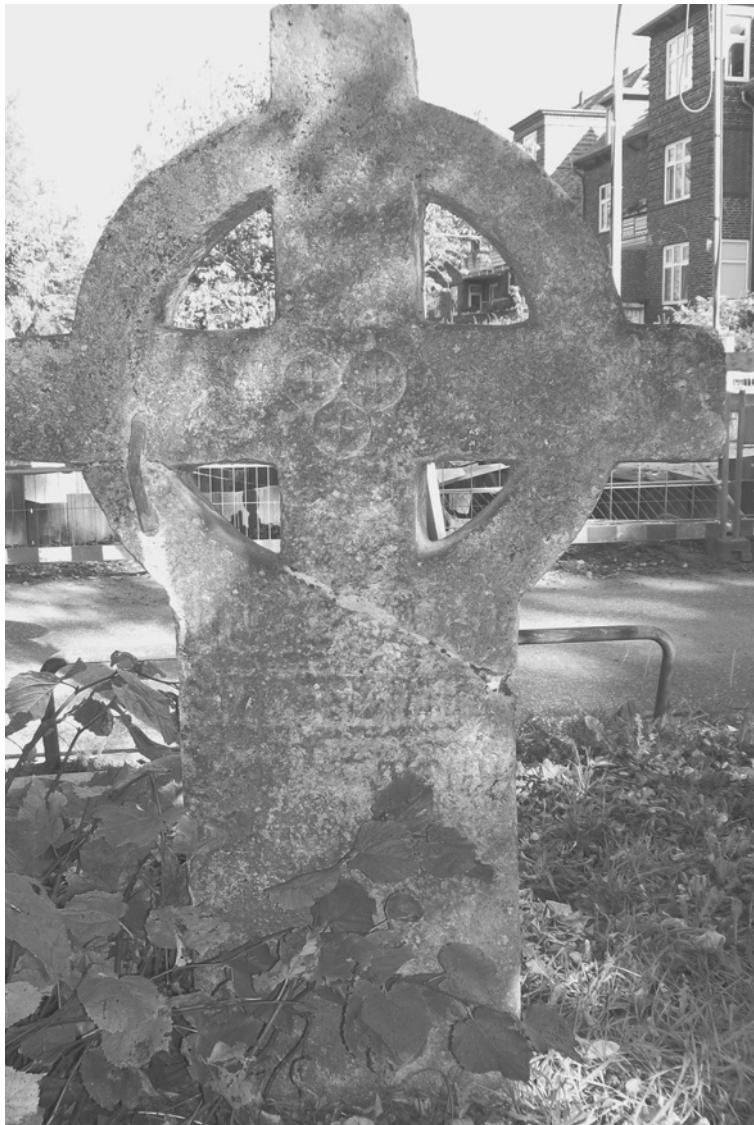


Fig. 6. Lübeck (Schleswig-Holstein, D), *Kleverschusskreuz* (1436).
Photo: Achim Timmermann.



Fig. 7. [COL. PL. X] Virgen (East Tyrol; A), pilgrimage cross (1455). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

over a holy well whose waters were reputed to cure pilgrims from backpain and rheumatism.¹⁶

Travelling during the Middle Ages and the early modern period could be dangerous, and sometimes ended in tragic death, caused either by cutthroats, wild animals or freak weather conditions leading to avalanches or floods. To mark the sites of these fatal encounters, the victims' relatives often commissioned special commemorative crosses with inscriptions detailing the cause of the accident, some kind of 'pictorial deputy' of the departed, as well as salvific imagery. The practice of putting up fatality crosses originated sometime during the high Middle Ages, and may itself go back to an even older tradition dating back to classical Antiquity. One of the oldest extant examples, now in the courtyard of the Stadtmuseum in Göttingen, commemorates the death of a blacksmith named Wilhelm, who was killed by wolves in either 1260 or 1360.¹⁷ Here, the professional and social identity of the victim is indicated by his tools of trade, carved into the *recto* and *verso* sides of the horizontal cross arm, though many other accident crosses feature heraldry and a devotional portrait of the deceased. A case in point is the commemorative *Bildstock* of Bieberehren in Lower Franconia, which rises above the embankment of the river Gollach. The cross, adorned with an escutcheon and topped by an image of the Man of Sorrows, draws attention to the location where during a torrential thunderstorm in 1432 the knight Bernhard of Thalberg drowned with his servants Wilhelm and Margarethe.¹⁸ One of the most unusual such markers stands by the bridge over the river Leine near the castle of Ricklingen, close to Hannover [Fig. 8].¹⁹ The monument pays tribute

¹⁶ Now replaced *in situ* by a copy. The original is preserved in the local parish church. See Dünninger – Schemmel, *Bildstöcke und Martern in Franken* 168.

¹⁷ Müller – Baumann, *Kreuzsteine und Steinkreuze* 233–234, with further literature and illustrations.

¹⁸ The inscription on the cross shaft reads: 'Anno d[omi]ni m cccc xxxii uf Samstag [n]ach arnolfi ist der [v]est und gestreng [b]ernhardt v[o]n talberg [ri]ter [...] und mit ein treuer knecht genannt Wilhelm und jungfrau gen[annt] margareth [...] und waren hie in wassernothe verschide den got gnat'. The original is now in Bieberehren's parish church and has been replaced *in situ* by a copy of 1970. See Dünninger – Treutwein, *Bildstöcke in Franken* 55; Dehio-Handbuch der Deutschen Kunstdenkmäler, Bayern I: Franken, ed. T. Breuer (Munich: 1999) 219.

¹⁹ See Von Reden H.-H., "Neue Erkenntnisse über den Gedenkstein bei Schloß Ricklingen", *Hannoversche Geschichtsblätter* 34/1 (1980) 27–39; Müller W., "Steinerne Scheibenkreuze in Niedersachsen", *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Heimatkunde im Bistum Hildesheim* 50 (1982) 119–136; Saal W., "Beischlagsteine und ihre Beziehungen zu Grabkreuzen und Sühnezeichen", *Steinkreuzforschung* 4 (1982) 30–35; Müller – Baumann, *Kreuzsteine und Steinkreuze* 58–59.

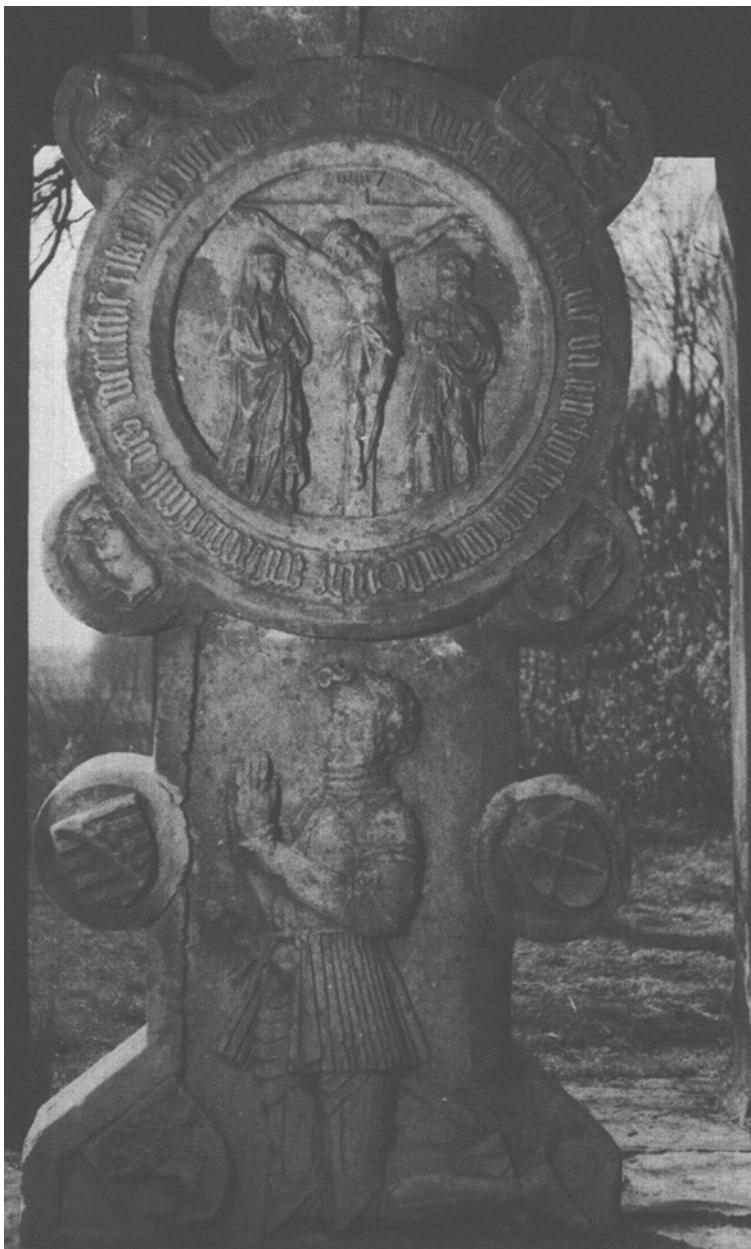


Fig. 8. Ricklingen (Lower Saxony, D), commemorative cross for Albrecht, Duke of Saxony and Lüneburg (1385). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

to Duke Albrecht of Saxony and Lüneburg, who, while besieging the castle in the spring of 1385, was hit by a catapult ball and mortally wounded.²⁰ The cross not only shows the dead duke amidst his coat-of-arms, kneeling below a Crucifixion scene, but also displays the lethal projectile, which is secured like a relic to the top of the disk by an iron clamp. To alleviate Albrecht's pains in Purgatory, an inscription encircling the image of Calvary encouraged passers-by to say a short prayer for the departed: 'hertoge albert [sic!] vo[n] sasse[n] un[d] luneborch unde corvorste unde arscmarescale des roemsche[n] rikes bid voer hem'. Fatality crosses, usually of a much simpler kind, continue of course to dot our highways to this very day, not only in Europe, but also in other parts of the Christian world. Recently (in September 2009), for instance, a painted *Bildstock* was erected near Klagenfurt to mark the location where in October 2008 the former leader of the ultra-right Austrian FPÖ, Jörg Haider, was killed in a car accident. According to media reports, this cross has already become a modern-day pilgrimage site, drawing Haider followers from throughout Austria and beyond.²¹

During the late Middle Ages, wayside crosses demarcated what may be called landscapes of death and commemoration in yet other significant ways. From at least the early thirteenth century onwards, so-called *Sühnekreuze* (penance crosses) were placed over the sites of murders, while *Armsünderkreuze* (poor sinner's crosses) – a fifteenth and sixteenth-century phenomenon – were erected at or near the gallows or execution platform outside many city walls, where they were intended to provide a dramatic backdrop for the condemned criminal's last confession and prayers. The origins of the penance cross are still not entirely clear, though one of the most important prerequisites for its development was furnished by the mechanics of high and later medieval law.²² Throughout the Middle Ages (and, in rural areas, often

²⁰ The inscription around the upper medallion of the south face reads: 'An[n]o 1385 iare uerteyen nacht na Paschen do togen de aan lunenborch mit örem heren hertogen albrechte to sassen vor die borch to ricklinge vppe de van mandelse dar so wart hertoge albrecht geworpen mit eyner blyen [*Blide*, a defensive siege engine] dat se afftogen vnde hertoge albrecht de starff dar van'.

²¹ <http://www.oe24.at/oesterreich/chronik/kaernten/Jetzt-kommt-Bildstock-fuer-Joerg-Haider-0544636.ece>, accessed 26 October 2009.

²² Losch, *Sühne und Gedenken*, *passim*. But see also the older publications by Hellmich M., "Der Ursprung der mittelalterlichen Sühnekreuze", *Mitteilungen der Schlesischen Gesellschaft für Volkskunde* 34 (1934) 139–153; Mogk E., *Der Ursprung der mittelalterlichen Sühnekreuze*, Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächsischen

beyond), the redress of a crime was primarily the affair of the injured party or his or her relatives, and only in the second instance one of the courts, which mostly acted as background mediators. A crime was thus largely settled on the level between a private plaintiff and the transgressor, with the nature of the compensation depending on an often bewildering number of customary laws, which drew themselves on Old Germanic folk law, canon law, and later also on Roman law. While in earlier centuries blood revenge still played an important part in the settlement of crimes, by the late Middle Ages many offences, often including manslaughter and murder, were adjudicated by non-violent means. These could comprise monetary compensations, but increasingly also ecclesiastical punishments. In the case of homicide, medieval courts drew up long catalogues of penance to which the culprit had to subject himself to atone for his sin. He could thus be required to have Masses sung for the soul of the un-confessed victim or to make a pilgrimage to Aachen, Wilsnack or Rome. In many instances, the perpetrator also had to pay for the making and erection of a cross, the size, iconography and location of which was determined by the court or relatives of the deceased.

Most penance crosses were put up at the alleged site of the murder – ‘eyn crucze setzen do der totslug gescheen ist’, in the words of a fifteenth-century court document from Breslau (now Wrocław) in Silesia²³ – though they could also be erected at visually more ubiquitous places such as bridges and crossroads. *Sühnekreuze* were generally relatively humble affairs, which usually came in the shape of a small stone crosses or steles incised with a crucifix. Frequently, the murder weapons – from swords to scissors, from pitchforks to spades – were also depicted. An array of four such simple penance crosses is preserved at Motschenbach near Kulmbach in Franconia, here in the form of carved slabs [Fig. 9].²⁴ Some crosses also featured inscriptions detailing the names of the murderer and victim, and the manner of

Akademie der Wissenschaften in Leipzig, Philosophisch-historische Klasse 81.1 (Leipzig: 1929); Frauenstädt P., *Blutrache und Todtschlagsühne im deutschen Mittelalter* (Leipzig: 1881), *passim*.

²³ Frauenstädt, *Blutrache und Todtschlagsühne* 190 no. 16.

²⁴ On this ensemble, see Azzola F.K., “Der Flur-Kreuzstein bei Wüstenbuchau im Landkreis Kulmbach”, *Archiv für die Geschichte von Oberfranken* 82 (1982) 139–144, with further literature. The crosses were moved to this site from their original locations only in the late eighteenth century. Legal historians call such accumulations *Kreuznester* or cross nests.



Fig. 9. Motschenbach (Bavaria; D), cross nest (14th to 17th centuries). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

death; a surviving example is the *Bildstock* at Heidingsfeld near Würzburg, also in Franconia, which informs travellers that at this very site in 1428 one Rüdiger Cuntz killed Hans Virenkorn with a knife.²⁵

The appearance in the decades around 1400 of the second category of judicial monument, the *Armsünderkreuz*, was intimately linked to the *ars moriendi* movement, whose proponents recommended the use of mobile panels and crucifixes to numb the fear of *moriens* and focus his last thoughts on the afterlife and the Salvation of his soul.²⁶ While providing a similar visual narcotic for the offender at the execution site, poor sinner's crosses also facilitated the ritual enactment of a soteriological connection between Christ's redemptive death and the penitent criminal's confession. While medieval rituals of punishment were often calibrated to eject the culprit from the social body his crimes had injured, the cathartic spectacle of a confessed death with its semantic connotation to Christ's selfless sacrifice allowed the transgressor to be reincorporated into the *communitas Christianorum*, albeit in his very last minutes. Only a handful of *Armsünderkreuze* have survived the judicial reforms of the Enlightenment and modern periods, a case in point being the already-discussed *Bildstock* at St. Stefan im Gailtal of ca. 1525 [Figs. 5 and 23] which, while frequently integrated into religious processions, also doubled up as a poor sinner's cross. Placed by the highway to the gallows of the provincial court of Aichelberg, this remarkable structure features, among other paintings, an image of St. Michael holding the flaming sword and the scales of judgment, no doubt a powerful allusion to the fate that awaited the criminal at the end of the road. An even rarer sight today than such isolated *Armsünderkreuze* are compounds which preserve both cross and scaffold. One of perhaps less than half a dozen such extant ensembles can be

²⁵ The text reads: 'Kuntz Rudiger hat hannsen vierenkoren derstochen und ist das geschehen Do man zalt von krist gepurt MCCCCXXVIII iar uff unsere herrn aufftag. Dornoch ist die besserung geschehen an dem firden ior am nehsten suntag nach Obersten'. On this monument, see Schott L., "Totschlagsühne und Steinkreuzerrichtung", *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der pädagogischen Hochschule Potsdam* 3 (1957) 47–53.

²⁶ I have explored this connection as well as other functional and symbolic aspects of late medieval *Armsünderkreuze* in two recent articles: (1) "Paysage moralisé: The Zderad Column in Brno and the Public Monument in the Later Middle Ages", in Opačić Z. (ed.) *Prague and Bohemia: Medieval Art, Architecture and Cultural Exchange in Central Europe*, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 32 (Leeds: 2009) 148–160; (2) "The Poor Sinner's Cross and the Pillory: Late Medieval Microarchitecture and Liturgies of Criminal Punishment", *Umění* 55 (2007) 362–373.

visited at Unterzeiring near Judenburg in Styria [Figs. 10 and 11].²⁷ Erected in ca. 1410 by the tax collector and provincial judge Thomas Zeller, this former execution site consists of a so-called *Nischenbildstock*, a kind of open-air chapel formerly adorned with appropriate imagery, and of the two-pillared gallows, which rises on a small hill about 150 metres to the north.

I have argued elsewhere that the combination of poor sinner's cross (sometimes of several poor sinner's crosses) and gallows *extra muros* may also have been intended to remind passers-by of another – and in this survey final – category of wayside cross, the Stations of the Cross (*Kreuzwegstationen*), an aid to substitute Holy Land pilgrimage introduced to Flanders and Germany during the final decades of the fifteenth century.²⁸ In contrast to pilgrimage crosses or poor sinner's crosses, whose physical and symbolic trajectories varied according to local context, the Stations were of course intended to transport their northern audiences to a very specific topographical and temporal environment – that of the biblical Jerusalem. Of the extant *Kreuzwegstationen* that of Adam Kraft in Nuremberg, dating to before 1509, is undoubtedly the most celebrated [Fig. 12].²⁹ His Stations, which

²⁷ See *Dehio-Handbuch Steiermark (ohne Graz)*, ed. K. Woisetschläger (Vienna: 1982) 579.

²⁸ Timmermann, "The Poor Sinner's Cross" 367. General studies on the Stations and their devotional use include Rudy K.M., "Northern European Visual Responses to Holy Land Pilgrimage, 1453–1550" (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University: 2000), chapter 4; Langé S. – Pensa A., *Il Sacro Monte: esperienza del reale e spazio virtuale nell'iconografia della passione* (Milan: 1991); Fabiani G., "Spätmittelalterliche Friedhofskruzifixe und Kalvarienberge im Rheinland und in Westfalen" (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Bonn: 1986); Roth E., *Der volkreiche Kalvarienberg in Literatur und Bildkunst des Spätmittelalters*, Philologische Studien und Quellen 2 (Berlin: 1967²); Kramer E., *Kreuzweg und Kalvarienberg: Historische und baugeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Studien zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte 313 (Strasbourg: 1957); Amadeus P., "Aperçu historique sur la devotion au chemin de la croix", *Collectanea Franciscana* 19 (1949) 45–142. Still useful are Kneller K.A., *Geschichte der Kreuzwegandacht von den Anfängen bis zur völligen Ausbildung* (Freiburg: 1908); Paulus N., "Zur Geschichte der Kreuzwegandacht", *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 33 (1909) 143–149; and Thurston H., *Stations of the Cross: An Account of Their History and Devotional Purpose* (London: 1906).

²⁹ For Kraft's Stations, see esp. Wegmann S., "Der Kreuzweg des Adam Kraft im Spiegel spätmittelalterlicher Frömmigkeit", in Kammler F.M. (ed.), *Adam Kraft: Die Beiträge des Kolloquiums im Germanischen Nationalmuseum*, Wissenschaftliche Beiträge zum Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums 20 (Nuremberg: 2000) 295–306; idem, "Der Kreuzweg von Adam Kraft in Nürnberg: Ein Abbild Jerusalem in der Heimat", *Mitteilungen des Vereins für Geschichte der Stadt Nürnberg* 84 (1997)



Fig. 10. Unterzeiring (Styria; A), poor sinner's cross (ca. 1410). Photo: Achim Timmermann.



Fig. 11. Unterzeiring (Styria; A), gallows (ca. 1410 and later). Photo: Achim Timmermann.



Fig. 12. Adam Kraft, Stations of the Cross, Nuremberg (ca. 1509). Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum. Photo: Achim Timmermann.

guided Nuremberg's vicarious pilgrims from the Tiergärtner tor to what was then known as the Pestfriedhof or plague cemetery (now Johannisfriedhof), consisted of seven *Bildstöcke* (now in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum) and two monumental ensembles of free-standing sculptures, a Calvary group [Fig. 28] part of which survives in the Heilig-Geist-Spital, and a Lamentation, which is preserved *in situ* in the cemetery's Holzschuherkapelle. The figures of the individual Passion narratives were arranged so as to mirror the direction of the viewer's movement; each scene was additionally identified by an inscription that informed the worshipper of the precise distance he – as well as the pictorial Christ – had to cover before arriving at the next Station. As Susanne Wegmann has shown, the spacing of Kraft's *via crucis* was based on the measurements provided in fifteenth-century travel accounts of actual Jerusalem pilgrims, such as those of Sebald Rieter the Younger and Hans Tucher (both 1479).³⁰

93–117; Zittlau R., *Heiliggrabkapelle und Kreuzweg: Eine Bauaufgabe in Nürnberg um 1500*, Nürnberger Werkstücke 49 (Nuremberg: 1992). Other extant Station cycles erected between ca.1450 and ca.1600 – including those of Bamberg, Lübeck and Saarbrücken – are discussed in: Böcher O., “Oppenheim als Jerusalem: Neue Erkenntnisse zum spätgotischen Oppenheimer Kreuzweg”, *Blätter für pfälzische Kirchengeschichte und religiöse Volkskunde* 65 (1998), 331–336; idem, “Noch einmal der Oppenheimer Kreuzweg”, *Blätter für pfälzische Kirchengeschichte und religiöse Volkskunde* 66–67 (1999–2000) 503–566; Böhme H.-G., “Zur Leiden-Christi-Verehrung im Spätmittelalter: Bau- und religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen auf Grund der Weilburger Passionskultstätte”, *Nassauische Annalen* 62 (1951) 67–97; Halm P.M., “Die Kreuzwegstationen zu Bamberg und Adam Kraft”, *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 10 (1898–1899) 57–65; Karrenbrock R., “Zwei spätgotische Kalvarienbergkreuze in Horstmar und Warburg”, *Westfalen* 67 (1989) 277–281; Koch (no first name given), “Kreuzberg von 1501 in Stuttgart”, *Christliches Kunstblatt für Kirche, Schule und Haus* (1905) 214–217; Meinardus O., “Die mittelalterliche Umwelt des Lübecker Schmerzensweges”, *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 72 (1992) 265–276; Meyer H., “Mittelalterlicher Stationsweg zum Kirchberg”, *Unsere Mainschleife* 12 (1995) 29–30; Petterhoffer R., “Bei den drei Kreuzen: Liturgisches und volksfrommes Leben am Grazer Kalvarienberg im Spiegel schriftlicher und bildlicher Quellen vom Beginn (1606) bis in die Gegenwart” (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Graz: 2001); Reinhard E. (ed.), *Der Grazer Kalvarienberg: Geschichte, Bedeutung und Anspruch, eine Dokumentation* (Graz: 2003); Rosshoff B., “500 Jahre Sonsbecker Kalvarienberg”, *Heimatkalender des Kreises Wesel* (1983) 97–99; Ten Hempel A., “Ein wiederentdeckter Kreuzweg des 16. Jahrhunderts”, *Westfalen* 19 (1934) 361–364; Trepesch C., “Die spätmittelalterlichen Kreuzwege in Saarbrücken”, *Zeitschrift für die Geschichte der Saargegend* 44 (1996) 71–95; Van Den Wijngaert P., “Een merkwaardige nederlandsche kruiswegoefering uit de XVde eeuw”, *Ons geestelijk erf* 22 (1928) 10–41.

³⁰ Wegmann, “Der Kreuzweg des Adam Kraft” 298–299, 303.

In their totality, then, the wayside crosses considered in this survey cast a dense network of itineraries, trajectories and significations across the urban and rural environments of late medieval and early modern Europe. As at St. Stefan im Gailtal, a single cross could perform several functions and thus become a node for a variety of spatial discourses. More than furnishing simple sites or repositories of individual and communal memory, wayside crosses, through their complex interactions with each other, created what Pierre Nora calls *milieux de mémoire*, environments of memory, rich immersive spaces in which memory was as yet untainted by its becoming mere history.³¹ As we will see, while containing as well as activating memories of different kinds – of people, spaces and quasi-timeless rituals – the dense web of wayside crosses, in tandem with its appropriation in text and image, ultimately produced a kind of transcendent ‘*meta-milieu de mémoire*’ that took travellers both backward in time, to Christ’s historical death on Golgotha, and forward, to his eventual blissful subsumation into the Heavenly Jerusalem.

*Spiritual landscape, I: Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg’s
Christenlich bilgerschafft*

From outer space to inner space, from physical landscapes to those of the soul: We now turn to our first text, Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg’s *Christenlich bilgerschafft zuom ewigen vatterland*, published in 1512, two years after the famous preacher’s death.³² Edited by his

³¹ Nora P., “Introduction”, in Nora P. (ed.), *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, 3 vols. (New York: 1997) I, 1–15.

³² *Christenlich bilgerschafft z[o]m ewige[n] vattela[n]d / fruchtbarlich angezeigt in glychnuß un[d] eige[n]schafft eines weg fertige[n] bilgers / der mit flyß un[d] yle[n]t sucht sin zitlich heymu[o]t. Gepredigt durch den hoch gelerte[n] Johan[ne]s geiler gna[n]t von Keiserßbergk / doctor der heilige[n] schrifft / predica[n]t lo[e]blicher gedechtnuß zu[o] straßburgk* (Basel, Adam Petri von Langendorff: 1512). Folio, 236 leaves, text on 455 double-column pages, each column of 45 lines; one half-page illustration (title page), decorated and historiated initials throughout. The copy used for this study is kept in Firestone Library at Princeton University. In 1513, a Latin version of this text, entitled *Peregrinus*, was published by Mathias Schürer in Strasbourg. For a comparative analysis of *Bilgerschafft*, see Fischer K., *Das Verhältnis zweier lateinischer Texte Geilers von Kaisersberg zu ihren deutschen Bearbeitungen, der ‘Navicula fatuorum’ zu Paulis ‘Narrenschiff’ und des ‘Peregrinus’ zu Otthers ‘Christenlich bilgerschafft’ nebst einer Würdigung der lateinischen Texte Geilers* (Metz: 1908). For an excellent biography of the preacher see now Voltmer R., *Wie der Wächter auf dem Turm: Ein Prediger und*

erstwhile and self-avowed *discipulus suus*, Jakob Otther, this substantial work is based on a series of sermon cycles Geiler delivered in Augsburg and Strasbourg between ca. 1478 and 1510, excerpts of which had been published on at least two previous occasions.³³ In essence, *Christenlich bilgerschafft* is a vast treatise on the allegory of life as perpetual pilgrimage (*peregrinatio vitae*), in which, owing to Eve's fatal curiosity in the Garden of Eden, mankind is forever compelled to wander in time, through a homeless desert in search of what Paul in *Hebrews* 11:13–16 calls *patria*, the celestial fatherland. Like other poems and tracts of its genre, such as Guillaume de Deguilleveille's *Pèlerinage de la vie humaine* (1331/1355), the Middle English *Weye of Paradys* (mid-fourteenth century) or John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), *Christenlich bilgerschafft* is concerned with the existential predicament defined as human, undertaking the journey from birth to death, from earth to heaven, restlessly moving forward to the city of Salvation.³⁴ What makes Geiler's homilies on *peregrinatio vitae* so relevant and interesting for the present study are two things: first, the text itself, in which wayside crosses and other roadside markers are transformed into metaphorical orientation aids in one's quest for *patria*, or, as it is called here, the *ewiges* or *hymmlisch vatterland*; and second, Urs Graf's frontispiece woodcut, to be considered further on.

seine Stadt. Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg (1445–1510) und Straßburg, Beiträge zur Landes- und Kulturgeschichte 4 (Trier: 2005); cf. also Israel U., *Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg (1445–1510): Der Straßburger Münsterprediger als Rechtsreformer*, Berliner Historische Studien 27 (Berlin: 1997); for Geiler's theological position, see Dempsey Douglass E.J., *Justification in Late Medieval Preaching: A Study of John Geiler of Keisersberg*, Studies in Medieval and Reformation Thought I (Leiden – New York – Copenhagen – Cologne: 1966, 1989²); cf. also Herzog G.J., "Mystical Theology in Late Medieval Preaching: Johann Geiler von Kaysersberg (1445–1510)" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Boston University; 1985).

³³ *Der bilger mit seinen eygenschaften auch figuren* (Augsburg, anon.: 1494); *Ein nutzlich büechlin dass man nennet den Pilgrim das hat der würdig doctor Keysersperg zuo Augsburg geprediget* (Augsburg, Lucas Zeissenmair: 1499).

³⁴ On the appropriation and transformation of the concept of perpetual pilgrimage in the artistic and literary imaginary of the Middle Ages and early modern period, see Edwards P., *Pilgrimage and Literary Tradition* (Cambridge – New York: 2005); Hagen S.K., *Allegorical Remembrance: A Study of 'The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man' as a Medieval Treatise on Seeing and Remembering* (Athens: 1990); Falkenburg R.L., *Joachim Patinir: Landscape as an Image of the Pilgrimage of Life* (Amsterdam – Philadelphia: 1988); Chew S., *The Pilgrimage of Life* (New Haven: 1962); for an anthropological perspective, see Sting S., *Der Mythos des Fortschreitens: Zur Geschichte der Subjektbildung*, Reihe Historische Anthropologie 16 (Berlin: 1991).

Christenlich bilgerschafft is divided into twenty-five chapters, each of which focuses on a characteristic or attribute (*eygenschafft*) the spiritual pilgrim is supposed to obtain and cultivate. As in many of Geiler's sermons, the individual sections of the book begin with a description of facets from the physical and often quotidian world (*sensus literalis*), and then embark on an allegorical interpretation of the many meanings encrypted therein (*sensus spiritualis*).³⁵ More specifically, each chapter uses one aspect from the world of corporeal pilgrimage (*lyblich bilgerschafft*) to construct a parallel, but higher universe of spiritual pilgrimage (*geystlich bilgerschafft*). The *eygenschaffen* treated include both material objects and actions associated with the experience of physical pilgrimage. Chapters three to nine for instance focus on the pilgrim's garb – his staff, mantle, hat or shoes – while other parts consider the pilgrim's comportment and attitude before, during and after the journey. Among the chapter titles, we thus find characteristics such as 'He has a dog' (13), 'He walks without haste' (16), 'He avoids the dangers of lust' (18), and 'He is joyously welcomed upon returning home' (25); obviously, many of these properties are based on rather idealized notion of actual pilgrimage. For our purposes, *eygenschafft* no. 11 (fols. CXVv–CXXIXv) is clearly the most relevant – 'He has instructions of the route and of the markers of the true road' ('[...] das er vorhin hat eyn underrichtung des wegs un[d] [der] zeiche[n] der rechte[n] lan[d]stroß'). According to Geiler, the pilgrim has a number of navigation aids at his or her disposal. These mainly comprise visual signs by the roadside, in particular artificial stone heaps erected by previous generations of travelers (*stein huffen*), wayside crosses (*krütz*), wooden hands attached to poles or other supports (*hültzene hand*), and buttons and badges nailed to trees by other pilgrims (*knoepff*); in addition, the *bilger* can also refer to a written itinerary or scrip (*zedel*), 'on which are the names of towns, villages and castles past which he will come'. For Geiler, these tangible

³⁵ For an extended discussion of Geiler's allegories and their sources in everyday life, see Eisenmann S., *Sed corde dicemus: Das volkstümliche Element in den deutschen Predigten des Geiler von Kaysersberg* Europäische Hochschulschriften I.1565 (Frankfurt – Berlin – Bern – New York – Paris – Vienna: 1996); Schuppert H., "Allegorie und Alltag: Ein Forschungsaspekt, illustriert mit Texten und Bildern bei Hans Sachs und Geiler von Kaysersberg", in *Symbole des Alltags – Alltag der Symbole: Festschrift für Harry Künnel zum 65. Geburtstag* (Graz: 1992) 661–681; cf. also Koepcke H., *Johannes Geiler von Kaisersberg: Ein Beitrag zur religiösen Volkskunde des Mittelalters* (Breslau: 1926).

things and seeable signs not only help the Christian pilgrim maneuver through physical landscape, they also light the way through the anti-landscape of his moral and ethical self. Here, each of these objects reveals its deeper meanings. The pilgrim's itinerary thus transforms itself into Holy Scripture, which should be studied with utmost diligence, while the badges attached to tree-trunks signify the totality of Creation, which upon proper contemplation will lead to knowledge of the Creator himself. Furthermore, the stone heaps, wayside shrines and wooden hands morph into salvific traffic signals that set ultimate standards of Christian virtue. Metaphorically planted by the roadside by the arch-pilgrim Christ himself, and increased in size and number by an endless procession of self-denying saints, the stone piles and wayside crosses embody all the agonies, sorrows and privations life's pilgrim must endure on his earthly voyage to the celestial fatherland, while the hands have come to exemplify nothing less than the good works he must perform *en route*. For the pilgrim to identify these signs and the stony and narrow road they flanked, is a matter of spiritual life or death, eternal reward or punishment. To emphasize this point, Geiler introduces the figure of the foolish pilgrim (*narrechter bilger*), who runs into these markers without recognizing them, and worse, leaves the road altogether in search of a shortcut or easier and more pleasant path, only to get lost in the woods, fall into ditches, become entangled in the undergrowth and eventually be murdered (fol. CXVI).

Geiler's depiction of *geystlich bilgerschafft* is saturated with references to some of the foremost authorities on *peregrinatio vitae*, in particular St. Paul's crucial Letter to the Hebrews, and the writings of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. What distinguishes his account from those of his predecessors, however, is his symbolic use of landscape elements and man-made sign systems known from the quotidian experience of contemporary pilgrimage, and travelling in general. In fact, the preacher was himself a hardy pilgrim: in 1483 he undertook the long journey from Strasbourg to St. Maximin near Marseille, to pray at the tomb of his favourite saint, Mary Magdalene.³⁶ On other occasions, he visited local shrines in Switzerland and the Alsace, including that of St. Ottilia, located in the Vosges mountains about 75 kilometres east of Strasbourg. He explicitly refers to this latter trip in *Christenlich bilgerschafft*, recalling the great number of wayside

³⁶ Israel, *Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg* 126–129.

shrines and wooden hands that had led him to the grave of the saint (fol. CXIV). In addition to benefiting from his personal familiarity with the physical topographies of pilgrimage, Geiler, in developing the rich semantics of his spiritual landscape, may also have tapped into an already existing pictorial tradition, in which the road and its markers are depicted as symbols of man's – Everyman's – moral and existential quandary. It appears that this imagery of what may be called "landscapes of the soul" was simultaneously developed in two separate geographical areas, the Rhineland and the Low Countries. I now wish to consider each iconographic strand in sequence, beginning with examples from Geiler's own region, the Upper Rhine.

Spiritual landscape, II: Pictorial traditions

The oldest surviving image [Fig. 13] is a woodcut from Sebastian Brant's didactic moral satire *Das Narren Schyff*, the *Ship of Fools*, first published in 1494 by Johannes Bergmann von Olpe in Basel.³⁷ The print is often attributed to the young Albrecht Dürer, and illustrates the contemporary adage 'Whoever gives good counsel to others, but stays himself where swamp and puddle are, is devoid of both reason and wisdom' ('Wer guten Weg zeigt andern zwar, doch bleibt, wo Sumpf und Pfütze war, der ist der Sinn' und Weisheit bar'). It depicts a rather pitiful fool who has become stuck in a bog, only yards away from the road he travelled on before. Undoubtedly he was supposed to stay on this road – a wayside shrine containing a crucifix and animated by a hand literally and unmistakably points the way! As is suggested by the presence of the Crucified, as well as by the road's physical qualities – it is stony and narrow – this is clearly no ordinary country lane, but one that will eventually lead its tired travelers toward virtue, knowledge of God and Salvation. Geiler must have had first-hand knowledge of this print, as his most famous cycle of sermons, delivered between 1498 and

³⁷ On the *Narren Schyff*, see Schmidt C. (ed.), *Das Narrenschiff* [exh. cat. Gutenberg Museum, Mainz] (Mainz: 1994); Lettieri D., "Some Sources and Methods for the Illustration of the Narrenschiff", *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 69 (1994) 95–105; Manger K., *Das Narrenschiff. Entstehung, Wirkung und Deutung* (Darmstadt: 1983). On Dürer's possible contribution to the project, see Winkler F., *Dürer und die Illustrationen zum Narrenschiff. Die Basler und Straßburger Arbeiten des Künstlers und der altdeutsche Holzschnitt*, *Forschungen zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte* 36 (Berlin: 1951).



Fig. 13. Albrecht Dürer (?), woodcut, illustration to Sebastian Brant's *Narren Schyff*, 1494. Photo: Achim Timmermann.

1499, was based on Brant's *Ship of Fools*.³⁸ As Brant himself does not refer to roadside markers, either as factual objects or allegorically, we must conclude that it was the image rather than the Brant's text that contributed to Geiler's own vision of spiritual topography and of the characters roaming therein. A figure that appears to have been directly inspired by the woodcut is Geiler's foolish pilgrim, whose attempt to find shortcuts between roads eventually ends in death.

We turn to the frontispiece of *Christenlich bilgerschafft* itself [Fig. 14]. Although the tract was published two years after the author's death, this woodcut by Urs Graf³⁹ and its accompanying poem are so close in spirit to Geiler's homilies as to suggest that the basic design for this page may have been devised by the old pulpiteer himself. The image shows a momentous encounter on the highway to heaven. The protagonists are a pilgrim, who briskly walks across what seems to be a narrow causeway, a benevolent angel emerging from a cloud and pointing to a wayside cross, as well as Christ himself, who blesses and beckons from inside the gate of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Given the fact that the pilgrim and his dog still seem to require the guidance of both a guardian angel and of a physical roadside marker it is doubtful that they are anywhere near the end of their journey. It rather appears that the artist, in order to accommodate all three protagonists and their respective ontological spheres in a single image, was forced to drastically foreshorten the distance between the pilgrim's actual position on the road and the moment of his triumphant entry into the celestial fatherland. This is confirmed by the poem below, rendered as a folk song in eight lines of rhyming doggerel, which reads:

'I want to devote myself to pilgrimage / and stride toward eternal life. / O angel mine, / show me now / the right way with all diligence. / O Christ, / I hear your voice so very well, / I must seek Jerusalem. / Toward the gate of Salvation I am shown the road / by the small wayside shrine

³⁸ There exist two editions of this cycle: *Navicula fatuorum* (Strasbourg, Mathias Schürer: 1510); *Des hochwirdigen doctor Keiserspergs narrenschiff* (Strasbourg, Johannes Grüninger: 1520). On Geiler's homiletic appropriation of the *Ship of Fools*, see esp. Bauer G., "Wandel und Bestand um 1500: Die Predigten des Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg über Sebastian Brants *Narrenschiff*", in Gehrke H. (ed.), *Wandel und Bestand: Denkanstöße zum 21. Jahrhundert, Festschrift Bernd Jaspert zum 50. Geburtstag* (Paderborn: 1995) 61–85, with further literature.

³⁹ My attribution. *Hollstein's German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts*, 9: *Urs Graf*, compiled by John K. Rowlands (Amsterdam: 1977) 131 no. 288, ascribes merely the decorated borders of the frontispiece to this master.

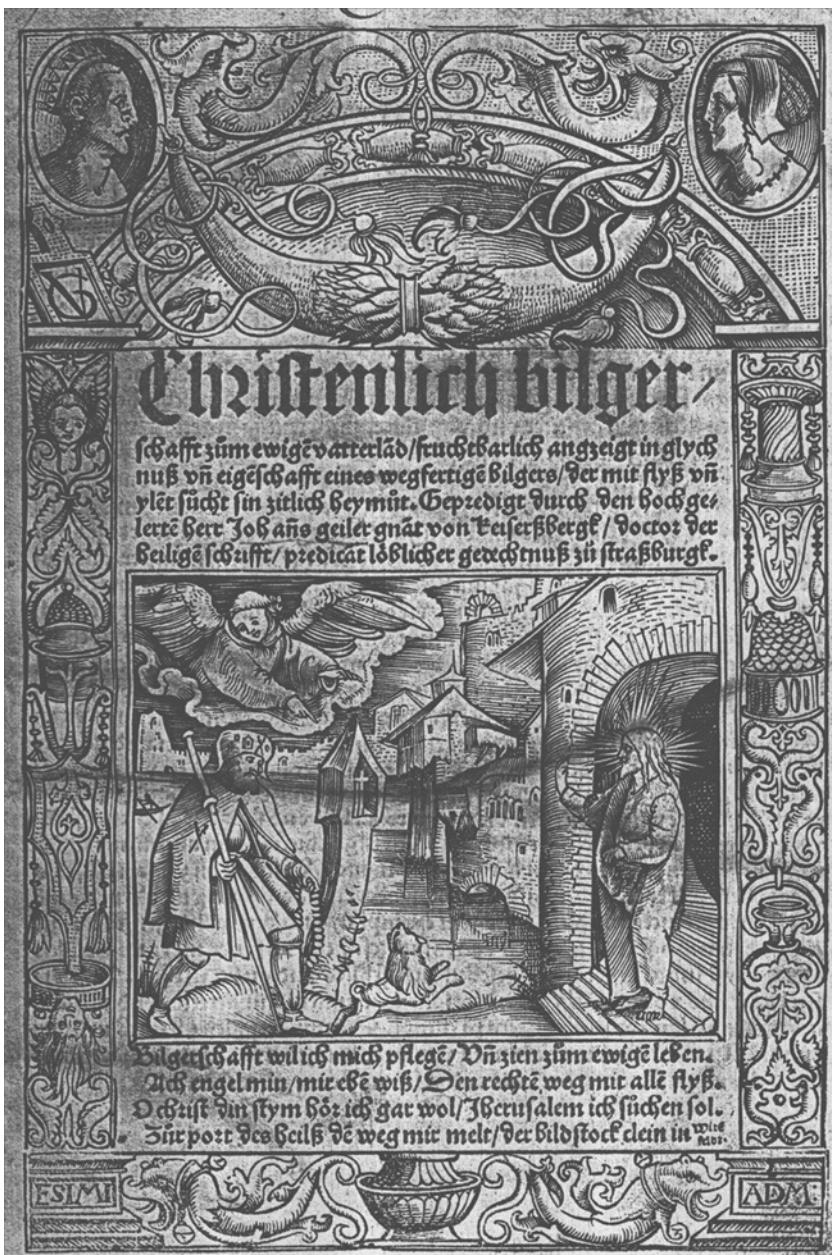


Fig. 14. Urs Graf, woodcut, frontispiece illustration to Johannes Geiler von Kaysersberg's *Christenlich bilgerschafft*, 1512. Photo: Achim Timmermann.

(*bildstock*) in the open field' ('Bilgerschafft wil ich mich pflege[n] / Un[d] zien zu[o]m ewige[n] leben. / Ach engel min / mir ebe[n] wiß / den rechte[n] weg mit alle[m] flyß. / O Christ din stym hör ich gar wol / Jherusalem ich suchen sol. / Zu[o]r port des heilß de[n] weg mir melt / der bildstock clein in wite[m] feldt').

In another woodcut by Urs Graf [Fig. 15],⁴⁰ made for a German edition of Erasmus of Rotterdam's famous compendium of humanistic piety, the *Enchiridion*, the Salvation-seeking pilgrim has been replaced by the figure of the spiritual soldier, who here grasps both sword hilt and crucifix.⁴¹ Ignoring the mocking gestures of two halfwits standing next to the roadside, this embodiment of militant *imitatio Christi* clearly knows where he is going, or, as Geiler would have phrased it, 'he has instructions of the route and of the markers of the true road'. Guided by the solemn, imperative gesture of the wayside shrine, he steadfastly journeys forth on the stony path of Christian virtue.

If in these visionary landscapes of the soul the road and its markers signify morality, life and Salvation, then, by implication, their blurred though luring surroundings become the killing fields of both soul and body. Nikolaus Manuel Deutsch's Foolish Virgin of 1518 [Fig. 16] is still very much alive, though, having erred from her path against the indication of the roadside shrine in the left background, she clearly represents an advanced stage of spiritual corruption.⁴² Not only is she very foolish (she daintily turns her oil lamp upside down), contemporary audiences may also have found it difficult to associate her cocky posture and provocative dress with virginity at all. Some scholars have

⁴⁰ Hollstein's *German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts*, vol. IX, 182 no. 359.

⁴¹ Erasmus, Desiderius, *Enchiridion oder handbuechlin eins christenlichen Ritters* (Basel, Adam Petri: 1520). On the *Enchiridion* and its portrayal of spiritual warfare, see Heuer D., *Das Idealbild des christlichen Lebens nach Erasmus' Schrift Enchiridion militis Christiani*, Edition Theologie 2 (Frankfurt an der Oder: 1997). For the concept of the *miles christianus* in the early modern period in general, see Wang A., *Der 'Miles Christianus' im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert und seine mittelalterliche Tradition: Ein Beitrag zum Verhältnis von sprachlicher und graphischer Bildlichkeit* (Bern – Frankfurt am Main: 1975).

⁴² The image forms part of a series of ten woodcuts of the Wise and Foolish Virgins; cf. *The Illustrated Bartsch*, XIII (formerly Volume VII), Part 4: *Sixteenth-Century Artists*, ed. W.L. Strauss (New York: 1981) 101–119; cf. also Anderson C., "Kluge und törichte Jungfrauen und ihre Nachfolgerinnen in der oberrheinischen Kunst", in *Le beau Martin: études et mises au point* [exh. cat., Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar] (Colmar: 1994) 103–113; cf. also Nikolaus Manuel Deutsch: *Maler, Dichter, Staatsmann*, [exh. cat., Kunstmuseum, Bern] (Bern: 1979) 404–407 no. 249, with further literature.



Fig. 15. Urs Graf, woodcut, illustration to Erasmus of Rotterdam's *Enchiridion militis christiani*, 1520. Photo: Achim Timmermann.



Fig. 16. Nikolaus Manuel Deutsch, *Foolish Virgin* (1518), woodcut.
Photo: Trustees of the British Museum.

indeed suggested that the image may satirize itinerant prostitution, which flourished greatly during the religious and social upheavals of the early sixteenth century, often turning entire stretches of countryside into open-air brothels.⁴³

Even more unfortunate than Deutsch's loose virgin is Hans Holbein the Younger's peddler, who is being ambushed by Death in broad daylight [Fig. 17]. While a gruesome skeleton mercilessly yanks him over the edge of the road into the fields of perdition, his faithful dog still glances hopefully at the wayside shrine in the distant background. The representation forms part of a cycle of woodcuts executed by Hans Lützelburger after drawings by Holbein, and published in 1538 as *Les simulachres & historiees faces de la mort*, better known as the *Dance of Death*.⁴⁴ Holbein's depiction goes beyond Geiler's notion of spiritual landscape. For Geiler, the road was after all a safe place, and as long as his *bilger* paid attention to the temptations beckoning on either side, nothing would happen to him or her. In Holbein's image, Death simply does not wait for the wanderer to submit to the tantalizing decoys of his kingdom, and, suddenly materializing in the wayfarer's own path, makes his killing there and then, within visual range of those markers that seemingly signal protection.

Where Upper Rhenish artists consistently depict *Bildstock*-shaped roadside markers, no doubt because this was the prevalent type throughout the southern parts of the German-speaking lands, the heavenly highways of their Netherlandish peers are generally demarcated by cruciform crosses, again in accordance with local usage. A particularly early case in point is the cross on the bridge that visually and symbolically links Jan van Eyck's Chancellor Rolin to the blessing Christ [Fig. 18] of circa 1435.⁴⁵ Such bridge crosses were common

⁴³ Anderson, "Kluge und törichte Jungfrauen" 110.

⁴⁴ *Les simulachres & historiees faces de la mort, autant elegamme[n]t pourtraictes, que artificiellement imaginées* (Basel, Melchior and Gaspar Trechsel: 1538). On this sequence of images, see esp. Hoffmann K., "Holbeins Todesbilder", in Brock B. (ed.), *Ikonographia, Anleitung zum Lesen von Bildern: Festschrift für Donat de Chapeaurouge* (Munich: 1990) 97–110; Rosenfeld H., "Holbein's Holzschnittfolge Bilder des Todes und der Basler Totentanz sowie andere Beispiele von der Einwirkung der frühen Buchillustration auf andere Werke", *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 59 (1984) 317–327.

⁴⁵ On van Eyck's much-published Rolin Madonna, see most recently, Lancri J., "Quand l'index n'est pas montré du doigt: Essai sur la Madone au Chancelier Rolin de Van Eyck", in Rougé B. (ed.), *L'Index: Actes du quinzième colloque du CICADA, 1er, 2, 3 décembre 2005, Université de Pau, Rhétorique des arts* 15 (Pau: 2009) 71–82; Gelfand L. – Gibson W. S., "Surrogate Selves: The Rolin Madonna and the Late Medieval Devotional Portrait", *Simiolus* 29 (2002) 119–138, with further literature.



Fig. 17. Hans Holbein the Younger, *Death and the Peddler* (1538), woodcut. Photo: Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig. 18. Jan van Eyck, *Madonna of Chancellor Rolin*, detail (ca. 1435). Paris, Musée du Louvre. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

throughout the Middle Ages, and still survive in some rural regions of France, for instance on the Pont des Pèlerins at Saint-Chély-d'Aubrac (Aveyron) on the *Via Podensis* to Santiago da Compostella.⁴⁶ While it is possible that van Eyck's cross was simply meant to represent such a man-made object, the fact that the composition anticipates the left-to-right sequence of pilgrim, causeway, wayside cross, blessing Christ and Heavenly Jerusalem in Urs Graf's frontispiece woodcut to *Christenlich bilgerschafft* can not be entirely ignored. Just like the pilgrim, Rolin at first sight appears to be just yards away from the Creator, though this

⁴⁶ See Timmermann A., "Wayside Shrines", in *Brill Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage*, ed. L. Taylor, (Leiden: 2009), 819.

is of course just an illusion. Rolin and the Christ Child exist in fact in different ontological realms, and the distance between these two spheres is almost insurmountable. Almost – because connecting the two is the bridge with its cross, a kind of salvific architectural umbilical that magically seeps from Christ's blessing fingers. What is more, this is a bridge that is already in use; we discern groups of tiny travelers making their way toward and past the cross, from the *rive gauche* with its domestic dwellings to the multi-spired Heavenly City above Christ and his Virgin mother. It appears as if these microscopic figures have quite a head start on Rolin himself.

With Hieronymus Bosch we enter more sinister worlds. His protagonists barely know their way, or often not at all, paying little or no heed to those very few clues that might lead them to Salvation. On the exterior of the *Haywain Triptych* (ca. 1510; Madrid, Prado), for instance, a tree shrine containing the figure of Christ is ignored both by a group of merry-making shepherds and by the peddler himself, who has so far and almost miraculously managed to stay on some kind of narrow road, but who now busies himself with warding off a rabid dog.⁴⁷ Whether the wayside cross in the left background of the central panel of the *Temptation of St. Anthony* [Fig. 19] of circa 1500, now in Lisbon, is equally disregarded by a procession of equestrian figures, or whether indeed it marks the bridge that helps them escape the pandemonium that surrounds them everywhere, is difficult to tell.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ For this painting, see esp. Warner M., "Angeles y máquinas: el destino de los seguidores del carro de heno", in Bango Torviso I.G. (ed.), *El Bosco y la tradición pictórica de lo fantástico* (Madrid: 2006) 341–357; Bozal V., "Riendo camino de la muerte", in *El Bosco y la tradición pictórica*, 59–79; Hartau J., "Das neue Triptychon von Hieronymus Bosch als Allegorie über den unnützen Reichtum", *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 68 (2005) 305–338; Mai E., "Der Heuwagen: Mostaert im Kontext von Bosch und Bruegel", in Mai E. (ed.), *Gillis Mostaert (1528–1598): Ein Antwerpener Maler zur Zeit der Bruegel-Dynastie* (Wolfratshausen: 2005) 126–141; De Bruyn E., *De vergeten beeldtaal van Jheronimus Bosch: De symbolie van de 'Hooiwagen' – triptiek van de Rotterdamse 'Markskramer'-Tondo verklaart vanuit Middelnederlandse teksten* ('s-Hertogenbosch: 2001); Gómez I.M., "El Peregrino de la Vida Humana del Bosco", *Archivio español de arte* 70 (1997) 297–302; Zupnick I., "Bosch's Representation of Acedia and the Pilgrimage of Everyman", *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 19 (1968) 115–132.

⁴⁸ For Bosch's *Temptation of St. Anthony*, see *Schrecken und Lust: Die Versuchung des heiligen Antonius von Hieronymus Bosch bis Max Ernst*, [exh. cat. Bucerius Kunst Forum, Hamburg] (Munich: 2008); Bango Torviso I.G., "Las Tentaciones de San Antonio de Lisboa: los ideólogos de la obra de El Bosco y su público", in *El Bosco y la tradición pictórica*, 21–41; *Les tentations de Bosch ou l'éternel retour* [exh. cat.,

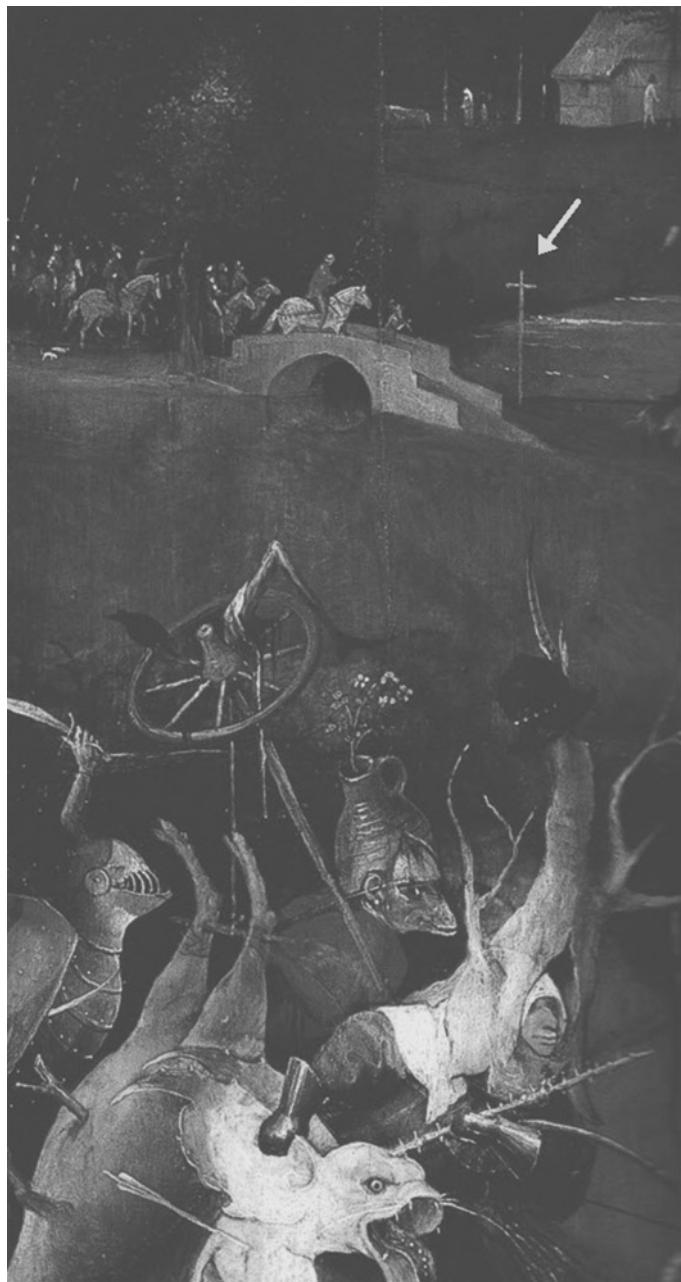


Fig. 19. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Haywain Triptych*, exterior detail (ca. 1510). Madrid, Prado Museum. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

And perhaps this is even beside the point. The principal function of this cross – and of the tree shrine in the *Haywain Triptych* – is of course to be eventually discovered by Bosch's viewers, but presumably only after they themselves have temporarily become ensnared by the painter's alluringly disturbing or bizarre creations in these veritable labyrinths of the gaze.

The last two images in this overview are Pieter Bruegel the Elder's enigmatic *Magpie on the Gallows* [Fig. 20] of 1568,⁴⁹ and his son Pieter Bruegel the Younger's *Road to Calvary*, of ca. 1600, which survives in numerous versions in museums and private collections around the world [Fig. 21].⁵⁰ On one level, the wayside crosses portrayed in both panels have a similar purpose to those in the paintings of Bosch: they furnish what may be called moral and salvific anchors in the otherwise mad or cruel pictorial worlds in which they exist. The juxtaposition at a crossroads in the foreground of the Magpie of both scaffold and cross thus literally turns the beholder into a wayfarer, a *homo viator in bivio*, who must choose between the path of vice, which is already well-trodden by frolicking and defecating peasants, and – on the side of the cross – the steep and narrow road of virtue, which takes him or her to a flour-grinding watermill, perhaps an allusion to the eucharist.⁵¹ As much was suggested in a recent article by Anne Simonson, who also pointed to sixteenth-century emblematic compilations as possible models for the seemingly unusual pairing of gallows and cross.⁵² In

Lisbon, Museo Nacional de Arte Antiga] (Milan: 1994); Vandenbroeck P., "Kommen die Adepen wieder? Über Bosch, Alchimie und esoterische Kunstwissenschaft", *Kunstchronik* 39 (1986), 477–481; Cuttler C.D., "The Lisbon Temptation of St. Anthony by Jerome Bosch", *Art Bulletin* 39 (1957) 109–126.

⁴⁹ On this work, now in the Hessisches Landesmuseum in Darmstadt, see Budnick B., "Questions of Irony in Pieter Bruegel's Magpie on the Gallows", *Georges-Bloch-Jahrbuch* 7 (2000) 68–83; Simonson A., "Pieter Bruegel's Magpie on the Gallows", *Konsthistorisk tidskrift* 67 (1998) 71–92; Genaille R., "La pie sur le gibet", in *Relations artistiques entre les Pays-Bas et l'Italie à la Renaissance: études dédiées à Suzanne Sulzberger*, Institut historique belge de Rome: Études d'histoire de l'art 4 (Brussels – Rome: 1980) 143–152.

⁵⁰ Ertz K., *Pieter Brueghel der Jüngere (1564–1637/38): Die Gemälde mit kritischem Euvrekatalog*, 2 vols. (Lingen: 1998–2000) vol. I, 396–408, with an illustrated catalogue of nearly two dozen copies and adaptations, and further literature.

⁵¹ On the literary and artistic motif of the wayfarer at the crossroads and the two roads, see esp. Harms W., *Homo viator in bivio: Studien zur Bildlichkeit des Weges*, Medium Aevum: Philologische Studien 21 (Munich: 1970); cf. also Trachsler E., *Der Weg im mittelhochdeutschen Artusroman*, Studien zur Germanistik, Anglistik und Komparatistik 50 (Bonn: 1979).

⁵² Simonson "Pieter Bruegel's Magpie" 72–74, 76–80.



Fig. 20. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The Magpie on the Gallows* (1568). Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum. Photo: Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

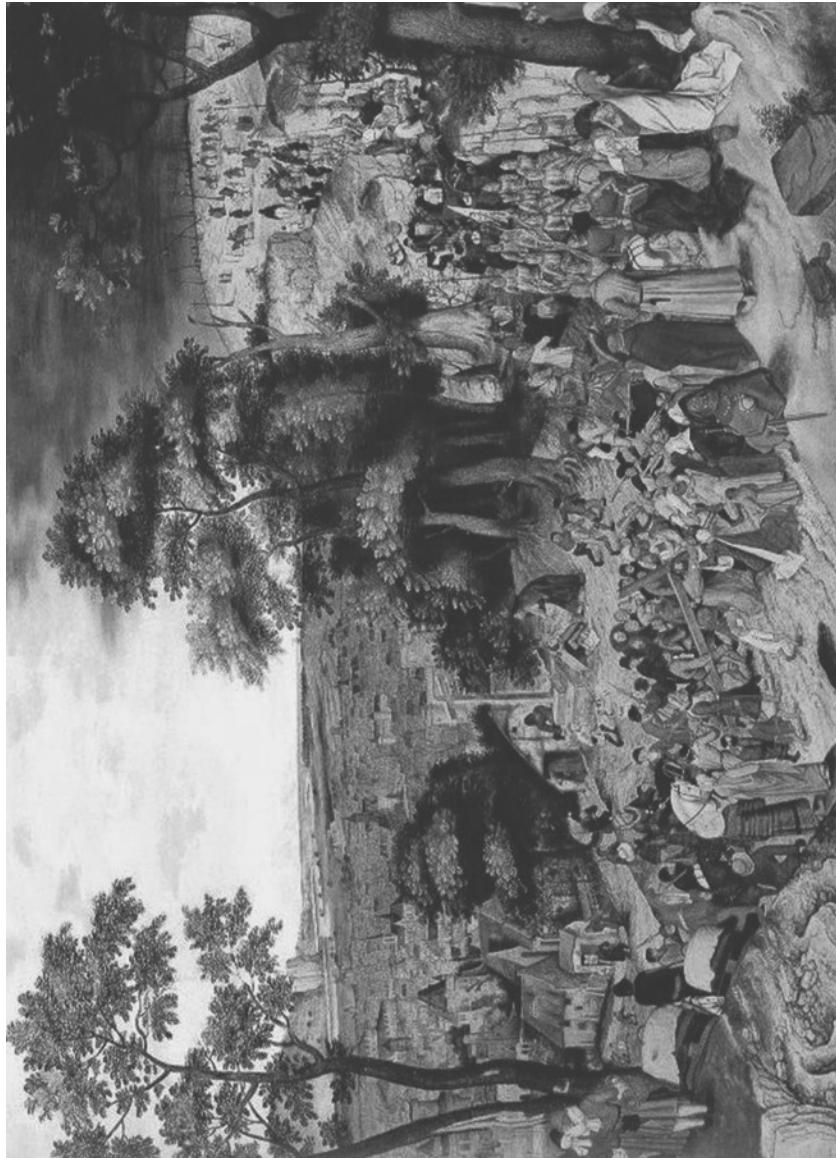


Fig. 21. Pieter Bruegel the Younger, *The Road to Calvary* (ca. 1600). Collection of Lord St Oswald, Nostell Priory, Northumberland. Photo: Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

light of my contribution, however, and also in light of Bruegel's own keen interest in contemporary rituals of criminal justice and capital punishment, as evinced, for example, by his drawing of *Iustitia* (1559; Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique),⁵³ we need to consider another possibility here – namely, that Bruegel's cross was inspired by poor sinner's crosses placed in close proximity to the civic execution sites of his native Flanders.

Pieter Bruegel the Younger's *Road to Calvary* [Fig. 21] – an imaginative elaboration of an engraving after elder Bruegel, known as the *Plaustrum belicum* (ca. 1555–1556)⁵⁴ – depicts a second such judicial marker. Set within a panoramic landscape, Christ carrying the cross features here as part of a poor sinner's procession with mounted soldiers and throngs of spectators that slowly makes its way to a dark, barren and gloomy Golgotha in the right background. Just above the diagonal of the cross carried by Christ rises a further cross, at the stepped base of which a nun – in a kind of micro-allegory of *caritas* – offers alms to a beggar. In this paralleling of Christ's actual cross with a poor sinner's cross on the sloping road to Calvary, the road to death becomes the road to life and Salvation, while the instrument of torture is transformed into an instrument of Charity, a gift and bequest to future mankind.

Heterotopia and the body of Christ

Thus far, we have considered two very distinct and, so it seems, experientially and ontologically unconnected types of environments imagined and then shaped by man – landscapes that could be experienced through vision, touch and physical movement, in which wayside crosses structured and gave meaning to the lives of urban and rural communities; and landscapes of the mind that could only be dwelt in spiritually, and in which *Bildstöcke* and other forms of road markers helped guide the soul in its perilous quest for Paradise. Were both landscapes mere mirror images of each other, or were they, in fact, two sides of the same coin? To put it in more specific terms, given the

⁵³ See *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints*, Orenstein N.M. (ed.) (New York – New Haven – London: 2001) 186 no. 72, with further bibliography.

⁵⁴ *Pieter Bruegel the Elder: Drawings and Prints* 130 no. 30.

broad dissemination of literary, homiletic and visual wayfaring allegories, and the close correlation between the soul-landscapes depicted therein and the physical landscapes inhabited by the audiences these allegories were aimed at, could corporeal pilgrimage, and travel in general, ever transform itself into mental and spiritual *peregrinatio*? If allegory was informed by physical experience, could physical experience be informed by allegory? If this were indeed the case, where did actual pilgrimage end and spiritual pilgrimage begin, at which point might a journey from town A to B, by foot or on horseback, have turned into a quest for the Celestial City? At the present stage of my project I am still grappling with these difficult questions, but I would like to propose here that one way of approaching them is to return again to those objects-turned-symbols that had played such a crucial role in the crafting of our oral, written and pictorial travel tales, namely, the wayside crosses themselves.

Dotting the natural environment in tens of thousands, wayside crosses left a potent signature on people's daily surroundings. Though erected for a variety of purposes, as detailed in the first part of this contribution, nearly all of these monuments had one thing in common: Passion iconography. In their ubiquity and totality, they projected countless images of holy torments into the everyday environment of fields, vineyards, forests, rivers and mountain ranges, suffusing and sanctifying these pieces of geography with the suffering body of Christ. He perpetually bore his cross by the roadside, moving along with the tired traveler carrying a knapsack or merchandise [Fig. 22], died his death on Calvary [Fig. 23], showing passers-by time and again his bleeding wounds, the instruments of his agony [Fig. 24], snapshots of his last hours and ultimate transcendence of mortality. For the attentive pilgrim or traveller, these recurring images of Christ's tragedy and triumph would have "charged up" the countryside around him, providing a moralizing gloss on the visible world and transcending it with exemplars of virtue and sacrifice. As such, wayside crosses not only marked the road from town A to town B or delineated processional or judicial topographies, they also described a vector from this world to the next, from a post-lapsarian present into a reconciliatory future. To eventually arrive at this invisible beyond, the voyager, while physically moving forward in space and time, was prompted to mentally travel backward, and walk with the Saviour to Golgotha. To reach the Heavenly Jerusalem, in other words, the traveller first had to visit, if only vicariously, the Jerusalem of the New Testament.



Fig. 22. Gerlachshausen (Bavaria), wayside cross. Detail showing carrying of the Cross (1511). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

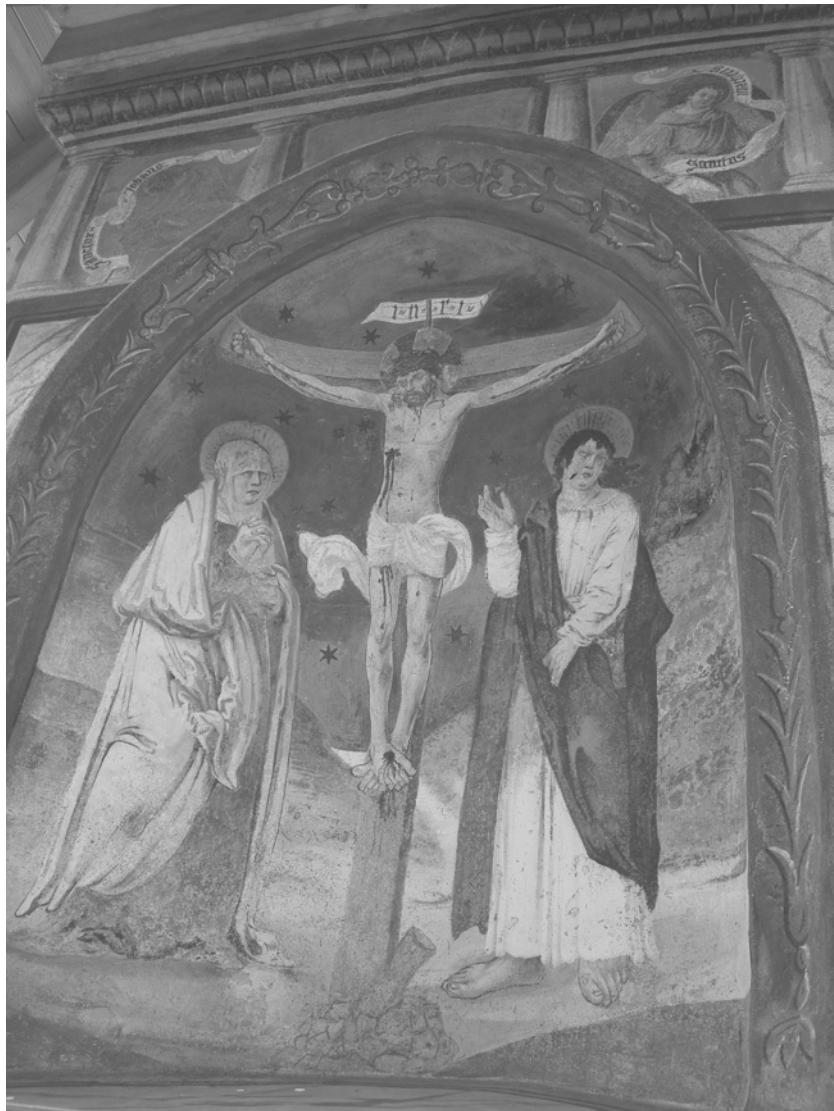


Fig. 23. St Stefan im Gailtal (Carinthia, Austria), Armsünderkreuz, detail showing Crucifixion (ca. 1525). Photo: Achim Timmermann.



Fig. 24. Eggolsheim (Bavaria), processional cross, detail showing *Man of Sorrows* amidst *arma Christi* (ca. 1500). Photo: Achim Timmermann.

More than furnishing nodes for the visible trajectories of the present, wayside crosses thus effectively served as ‘access portals’ and ‘thresholds’ to a series of invisible trajectories that lead both to the past and to the future. In their ambiguous spatial presence and temporality, these monuments produced what Michel Foucault, in his seminal article “Des espaces autres”, calls ‘heterotopia’ and ‘heterochronia’.⁵⁵ He defines heterotopias as places of simultaneity, of the near and far, the side-by-side that juxtapose ‘in a single real place several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible’.⁵⁶ Because ‘heterotopias are most often linked to slices in time [...] they open onto what might be termed [...] heterochronias; the heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time’.⁵⁷ Furthermore, Foucault adds, ‘heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable’; to gain access ‘the individual has to submit to rites [...] and make a certain number of gestures’.⁵⁸ Thus, whenever wayside crosses were gazed at and ritually interacted with, they became ‘openings’ through which the divine plan of Salvation could be glimpsed, momentarily transforming the muddy roads on which they stood into luminous pathways leading from the gates of Eden to those of the Celestial City.

We conclude with one last set of images, three small woodcuts by Erhard Schoen of circa 1520 [Figs. 25–27], which perfectly translate Foucault’s idea of localized apertures that disrupt man’s conventional experience of space and time into pictorial language.⁵⁹ Each image shows a landscape with a crucifix, in front of which a couple performs the kinds of devotional acts still recorded by Johann Füssel more than

⁵⁵ Foucault M., “Des espaces autres”, *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 5 October (1984) 46–49.

⁵⁶ Foucault, “Des espaces autres” 48: ‘L’hétérotopie a le pouvoir de juxtaposer en un seul lieu réel plusieurs espaces, plusieurs emplacements qui sont en eux-mêmes incompatibles’.

⁵⁷ Ibidem: ‘Les heterotopias sont liées, le plus souvent, à des découpages de temps... elles ouvrent sur ce qu’on pourrait appeler [...] des hétérochronies; l’hétérotopie se met à fonctionner à plein lorsque les hommes se trouvent dans une sorte de rupture absolue avec leur temps traditionnel’.

⁵⁸ Ibidem 49: ‘Les heterotopias supposent toujours un système d’ouverture et de fermeture qui, à la fois, les isole et les rend pénétrables [...] il faut se soumettre à des rites [...] et [...] accomplir[r] un certain nombre de gestes’.

⁵⁹ *The Illustrated Bartsch*, vol. XIII (Commentary): *German Masters of the Sixteenth Century: Erhard Schoen, Niklas Stoer*, ed. W.L. Strauss (New York: 1984) no. 1301.088 (b–d).



Figs. 25–27. Erhard Schoen, *A Couple Performing Devotions before a Wayside Cross* (ca. 1520). Woodcut. Photo: Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig. 26.



Fig. 27.

a quarter of a millennium later. In the first woodcut, they approach the cross with candles; in the second, they kneel and pray; in the third, they stand and extend their hands toward the Crucified. What makes this mini-series so intriguing is the ambiguity with which the body of Christ has been depicted. Is the couple looking at a rural wayside cross with the *imago crucifixi* or have they miraculously been transported to the outskirts of Jerusalem to become privileged witnesses of the actual Crucifixion? The crucifix resembles that of Adam Kraft's Calvary group on Nuremberg's Johannisfriedhof [Fig. 28], yet in Schoen's prints the corpus is strangely animated, with fluttering loincloth and limbs that change their position from picture to picture. This ambiguity appears deliberate: the Saviour's pictorial *double* endlessly melts into the historical Christ, while the contemporary landscape setting flickers with the mirage of Golgotha – and vice versa. Similarly, the couple's sensory experience of Christ oscillates between optical and mental vision, physical and spiritual touch. Schoen's paradoxical crucifix, then, is like the looking glass through which Alice steps into Wonderland, providing a mysterious gateway from the gentle hills of sixteenth-century Franconia to the redemptive urban landscapes of the two Jerusalems, from the here and now to the there, then and hereafter.



Fig. 28. Adam Kraft, Calvary group, Pestfriedhof (now Johannisfriedhof), before 1509 (old postcard).

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IMAGES, RUBRICS, AND INDULGENCES ON THE EVE OF THE REFORMATION¹

Kathryn M. Rudy

Illuminated manuscripts provide salient opportunities for the study of image-text relationships, since, with few exceptions, the images have a built-in textual context. What is less apparent, however, is that prayer books and books of hours – even unillustrated ones – often forge relationships between the reader and images *outside* the manuscript. Some unillustrated prayer books provide scripts for a votary to recite in the presence of images that the manuscripts themselves do not contain. This article considers some of those relationships in Netherlandish prayer books of the fifteenth century. It addresses the authority of the word as medieval readers understood it and applied it to the devotional images they encountered both within their illuminated manuscripts as well as in other spheres of their private and public visual environment. In preparing for the lecture upon which this paper is based, I looked into the collection of single leaves at the Pitts Theological Library at Emory University.² In their small but impressive collection, I found four leaves from Dutch manuscripts, all of them from Delft. Since three of the four have long, rubricated indulgences for prayers devoted to the Passion, I have used them to focus my ideas about rubrics, images and indulgences pertaining to devotion to Christ's Passion around two issues; first, how did rubrics take on an authorizing role within the late medieval prayer book? And secondly, how did rubrics shape reader's reception of images? To address these questions, I first analyze the linguistic structure of rubrics, in order to consider how they function and what kinds of authority they claim. I then contextualize the fragments in the Emory collection, which are

¹ This article forms part of a larger study provisionally titled *The Spiritual Economy of Images: The Performance of Prayer on the Eve of the Reformation in the Low Countries*. I gratefully acknowledge three years of financial support from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) for a post-doctoral project, which I carried out at the University of Utrecht.

² I thank Debra Madera and Pat Graham for providing these images.

all Christological in theme. To offer a fuller view of late medieval piety as it pertains to rubrics and prayers, I also include some discussion of examples of Marian rubrics, images, and prayers.

The Linguistic Structure of Rubrics and Prayers

Since prayers and rubrics are the two principal textual genres contained within prayer books, it is helpful to define the linguistic structure of prayer, which differs considerably from that of rubrics, in order to think about how the prayer book – and prayer itself – functioned.³

A rubric is an introductory text, usually copied in red ink, and written in a voice distinct from that of the prayers themselves. Whereas prayers are usually written as monologues directed toward some supernatural power, such as Jesus or Mary, rubrics are written in the language of instruction. They inform the reader of what he or she needs to do in order to make the accompanying prayer efficacious, and what to expect as a reward for having done so. In the late medieval system of sin, penance, purgatorial sentences and remission, the reward for prayer was often years – or thousands of years – of indulgence (i.e., remission from time in purgatory).⁴ Rubrics were also implicated in prayer's self-justification, in that they trumpeted the efficacy of prayer. Sometimes the rubric is longer and more elaborate than the prayer itself, as in this example from a prayer book written and decorated in Delft around 1470 [Fig. 1].

Whereas rubrics are written in directive or explanatory language, prayers, on the other hand, are written in different linguistic voice. In the course of compiling the rubrics and prayers for a larger study of rubrics and prayers in Netherlandish prayer books, I have identified three main kinds of prayers that appear repeatedly (although it should be noted that these categories overlap).

³ Other textual genres within prayer books include calendars, lists (such as 'Seven Works of Mercy' or 'Seven Deadly Sins'), and talismans. Talismans are such an important and understudied category that I will dedicate an entire book to them, tentatively titled *The Prayer book as Talisman*.

⁴ Swanson R.N., *Indulgences in Late Medieval England: Passports to Paradise?* (Cambridge: 2007); Caspers C.M.A., "Indulgences in the Low Countries, c.1300–c.1520", in Swanson R.N. (ed.), *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits. Indulgences in Late Medieval Europe* (Leiden: 2006) 65–99, and the other articles in this volume.

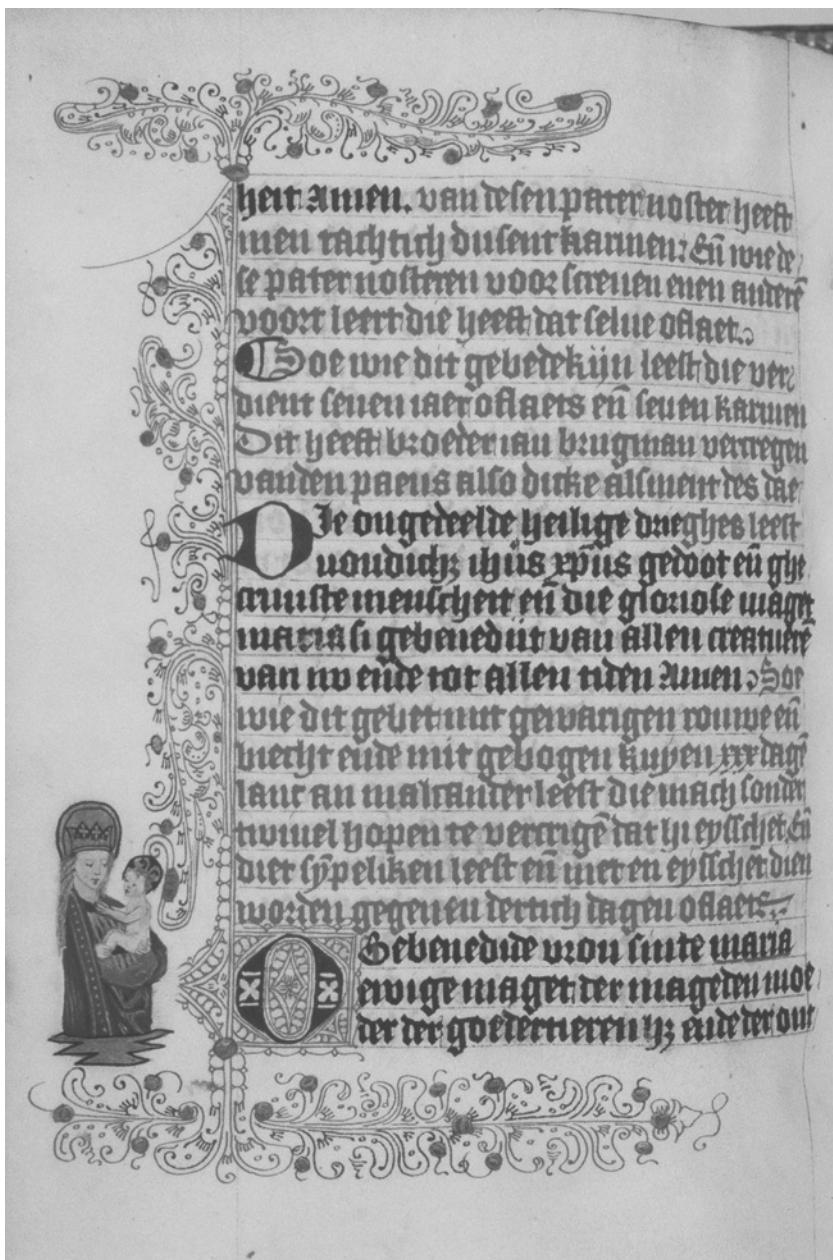


Fig. 1. [COL. PL. XI] Page from a Delft prayer book, ca. 1470. Manuscript on parchment. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Ms 135 E 22, fol. 168v. Image: Koninklijke Bibliotheek – The National Library of The Netherlands.

Prayers of Supernatural Nouns

The utterance of certain words partook of the divine. Prayers such as the ‘72 Names of Jesus’ and the ‘72 Names of Mary’, as well as prayers listing the singular names of saints, the names of the personages of the trinity, the words listed on the INRI titulus, prayers to the names of Jesus, Mary, the IHS monogram, prayers that name and invoke supernatural objects, and names and circumlocutions for divine beings all fall into this category. These words summoned the referent by naming him or her, and thereby harnessing supernatural power. I therefore call them *prayers of supernatural nouns*. The logic behind the power of the Word in this sense stems from the Old Testament, specifically the idea that Yahweh’s name itself was divine, that anything inscribed with his name became sacred. That his name was too powerful to utter (and therefore required seventy-two circumlocutions, which themselves became sacred) underscores the logic of the prayers in this category.

Prayers as historical monologues

Some of the most common prayers fall into this category, including the Ave Maria, the Pater Noster, and the Credo. Many rubrics purport to present words that were first uttered at an identifiable moment from scripture, which would also lend the words authority. Eamon Duffy describes such prayers as ventriloquial.⁵ I call the texts in this category *prayers in the language of historical monologues*.

Prayers of Entreaty

The Seven Penitential Psalms provide a linguistic model for these prayers, which are written in a pleading or praising language. A first person ‘I’ addresses a divine or beatified second person ‘you’. The resulting monologues construct a direct address from the reader to some higher power, such as the Virgin, Jesus, a saint, or even God in such terms as, ‘I beg you [...] I thank you [...] I beseech you’. Sometimes they address an image, which stands as a proxy for its referent.

⁵ As Eamon Duffy writes, ‘By and large, medieval people did not speak for themselves when they prayed. They articulated their hopes and fears, however deeply felt, in the borrowed words of others, which they made their own in the act of recitation’. Duffy E., *Marking the Hours* (New Haven: 2006) 104.

Furthermore, prayers often contain introductory segments written in the Second Person, which describe the higher power, such as, ‘You are so great, so strong, omnipotent’, or ‘[...] hallowed be thy name’. Such declarative statements establish that lines of communication are open, and at the same time, underscore the power differential between the suppliant and the putative listener. Often the play between the first- and second-person sections in a prayer dramatizes the meekness of the reader and the strength of the higher power, as in: ‘I, a miserable sinner, thank you, the all-knowing Lord, for all your tribulations, and I beg you to protect me’. Otherwise, a prayer written as a pleading request implies a second person subject: ‘[Could you please] protect me;’ or, ‘[I implore you to] redeem me’. Implicit in such a prayer is the possibility that the busy saint will not hear the persistent, but small-voiced sinner, or that the saint may ignore pleas whose outcome would harm, rather than benefit, the petitioner. I call these *prayers of entreaty*.

It is possible to identify many other kinds of prayer, such as prayers that rhyme, prayers that ask for forgiveness for a third party, prayers for blessing sacramentals, suffrages (which consist of a prayer, verse, and response, usually directed toward a saint), and other kinds of religious writing such as instructional epistles, exegesis on biblical texts, mystical revelation, and spiritual (auto)biography, to name a few a few other genres of writing that might also serve as prayer. The current article, however, will primarily address prayers that fall into the three categories enumerated above. Prayers often combine multiple categories, so that a prayer of entreaty might contain a refrain of the *Pater Noster*, for example, or an internal list of names that evoke the supernatural.

The workings of prayers can be understood in terms of the linguistic theory of the speech acts as formulated by philosopher J.L. Austin.⁶ In *How to Do Things With Words*, he distinguished between ‘constative’ speech acts – which include most sentences, including those that declare facts, ask questions, or express amazement – and ‘performative’ speech acts, which *do* something. Performative speech acts make a promise or effect a change through the instrument of language. They include stating oaths (‘I swear that [...]’), taking vows (‘I marry thee’), or naming something (‘I name this ship the Argo’). They accomplish

⁶ Austin J.L., *How to do Things with Words* (Cambridge: 1962).

the act to which they refer, as long as they abide by some criteria. In order to be official, recognized, or efficacious, performative speech acts must be enacted according to a set of standards and carried out with appropriate intent and gravity by persons who are eligible to perform them.⁷ The participants must abide by conventional rules in order to validate the performance. For example, swearing an oath may require the oath-swearer to raise one hand and place the other on a Bible. The marriage might be binding only if the partners state their vows in the presence of an official. The naming of the ship might require that someone break a bottle of champagne across its bow.

In a Christian context, performative speech acts play a part in two defining moments of sacred history. The first relates to the beginning of time when God created the world with his words ('Let there be light'), thereby effecting a change with the utterance; namely, creating the universe. The second relates to Jesus' words at the Last Supper, when he declared that the food on the table was his body and blood. Because these words were Christ's, and therefore divine, they were so powerful that even a parish priest, with all his faults, could repeat the words 'Hoc est corpus meum' over the bread during mass and thereby effectively change it into the body of Christ. As Rachel Fulton has pointed out, 'the power in the words was, after all, Christ's, not the priest's'.⁸ They therefore fall into Category 2, as listed above. We will see below how the origin of the words that a votary pronounced – whether the words had originally been uttered by Jesus or an important saint, for example – had great bearing on the legitimacy of the prayer and its authority to effect change. Because praying is an act of elocution, reading a prayer exemplifies a performative speech act in that it constituted, at least in the mind of the votary, an efficacious operation by virtue of its utterance, as long as it abided by the requisite conditions. Rubrics often itemized these conditions.

Reciting prayers differs from other kinds of performative speech acts in two ways. In many cases, only the votary him- or herself would know whether the appropriate conditions had been met for the speech act to have been performed. This is always true in the case of silent prayer. Second, the 'correct' conditions for prayer were constantly

⁷ Austin, *How to do Things with Words* 14–15.

⁸ Fulton discusses this in the context of Paschasius Radbertus' *De corpore et sanguine Domini* (ca. 790–865). See Fulton R., *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200* (New York: 2002) 49.

changing, and consequently, as we will see, rubrics were in a constant state of flux, as they reflect the unstable demands on the votary with their attendant escalating rewards.

Rubrics continuously redefined the proper circumstances for prayer, by demanding sufficient solemnity and proper attitude, and by describing appropriate choreography. Properly following the instructions helped to obviate the failure of the plea. Unlike prayers, rubrics do not provide a script for the votary to repeat in order to beg, pray, or beseech, nor do they supply words that are to be repeated with contrition. Rather, they provide instructions on how to beg, pray, or beseech effectively. Rubrics exhort the reader to abide by a conventional, correct and complete procedure, to use Austin's formulation. Some rubrics share the language of instruction manuals, providing operational handbooks for the care of the soul.

While rubrics boast of prayers' potency, the prayers themselves, in the spirit of self-abnegation bordering on obsequiousness, often contain clauses claiming the current prayer as a mere pittance. The prayer often refers to itself as a gift of the smallest sort, a modest offering to a recipient of super-human stature. This difference is also reflected in the tone of the two forms of prose; while rubrics are written in the voice of authority and lay claim to generous spiritual rewards, prayers are read in the voice of the supplicant, posed as the weak whisper at the foot of the godhead. This linguistic differential has a visual corollary in the many early fifteenth-century paintings from Northern Europe in which Mary or Jesus overshadows and looms over a kneeling petitioner. The donor appears in powerless profile, small, insignificant, and often ignored by the large, frontally presented, empowered deity at the centre. A spiritual celebrity, often a saint, typically presents the donor, a pictorial equivalent of the saints' testimonials to the power of prayer. An example of this relationship appears in the epitaph of Hendrik van Rijn, one of the earliest surviving panel paintings from the Low Countries, painted around 1363, probably in or near Utrecht [Fig. 2].⁹ The painting formerly hung in the Sint-Janskerk in Utrecht. Hendrik, who

⁹ The inscription at the bottom of the image identifies the patron and the date. It reads, 'Anno domini: M^o: CCC^o: LXIII^o: in cius. Obiit dominus henricus archidiaconus, istivsque altaris crastino sancti bonifacii et socior^{<orum>} reno^{<ator>}. Hui<us> eccl<es>ie prepositus et ar<ae> fundator. Orate pro eo' (In the year of Our Lord 1363, the day after St. Boniface and his unfortunate companions [6 June] died Hendrik van Rijn, provost and archdeacon of this church, who founded this altar. Pray for him).

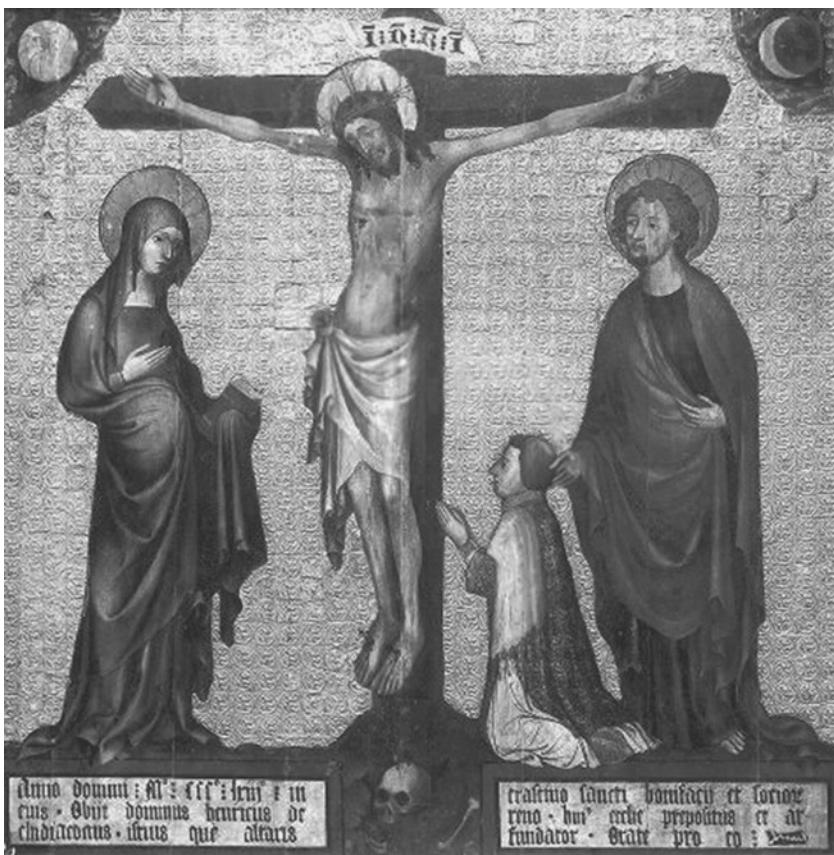


Fig. 2. Epitaph of Hendrick van Rijn, made for the Sint-Janskerk in Utrecht, 1363. Oil on panel, 133 × 130 cm. Antwerp, Museum voor Schone Kunsten.
Image: Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatriomonium.

kneels at the foot of the cross, is not shown reading, though he may have prayed with a book propped up on a prie-dieu in front of him. He focuses his gaze in the direction of Christ and the cross.

The epitaph of Hendrik van Rijn presents a hierarchical relationship between the patron and the object of his devotion, a relationship that can be read in grammatical terms. The painting presents a tiny votary kneeling before an immense image of Christ Crucified, who fills the picture surface with his outspread arms, an image imposing in its frontality. The donor is forever overshadowed by, and mindful of, Christ's bleeding arms and therefore his sacrifice. Mary and John the Baptist, who flank Christ, function as intercessors. They literally and

metaphorically come between the votary and the decision-maker, the frontally disposed and suffering Jesus. The picture depicts the votary's relationship to God, made manifest in Jesus. It is a relationship of strict hierarchy. The votary appears meek, flattened, and in profile. His attention rests upon the figure of Christ, and directs our attention to him as well. Hendrik leans forward to address Jesus, relying on the status and power of the suffering Christ to bring him into eternal salvation. The patron so portrayed pelts Christ's side with prayers in perpetuity, but nothing in the image suggests that Christ will heed, or even see, the tiny patron at his feet. At the same time the painting presents the image of Christ to the viewer outside the picture. Although the beholder cannot share Christ's space, as does the patron in the image, the external viewer is both more similar in scale to the crucified Christ and enjoys face-on visual access to the Godhead that the patron does not share. Most importantly, living viewers of the painting are capable of praying actively as the deceased patron no longer can.

The function of an epitaph painting is to present a visual memory of the deceased, who appeals to surviving Christians and those of the future by having himself represented in a perpetually prayerful state.¹⁰ Because the dead can no longer pray, the living, according to the rules of the operations of grace, must pray on their behalf. A living person can pray for his own soul or for someone else's, but the dead have to rely on the living to assist them out of Purgatory. Saints can pray or intercede on behalf of souls, because they have passed beyond death to eternal life. Through an epitaph painting, the dead make their case for salvation to the living. Even though the soul of the deceased donor is powerless, the epitaph painting creates an ideal structure that places the votary in a state of prayer that is continuous, repetitive, and perpetual. Hendrik van Rijn appears small, meek, and powerless as envisioned at the wounded feet of Jesus. The grid-like ornament, rendered in low relief on the gold leaf background, depicts a lion motif repeated. The repetition of this powerful form in precious material inflects the repeated prayers, gilded words uttered powerfully, as if through the mouth of a lion, filling the nebulous atmosphere from wall to wall, and flooding the vague, eschatological and amorphous space. The frame,

¹⁰ For a discussion of the earliest epitaph paintings in Northern Europe in the context of mnemonics and eschatology, see Bueren T. van, *Leven na de dood: Gedenken in de late Middeleeuwen*, exh. cat., Utrecht, Het Catharijneconvent (Turnhout: 1999).

pictorially studded with precious stones, recalls a precious book binding that encases, protects, and ornaments the image and the prayer. Hendrik van Rijn, in other words, closely follows the rules in expressing his meekness and need for protection, and hopes for a gilded, bejeweled afterlife. The optimism with which he is represented, as well as his prayerful state and the jewel studded frame that surrounds the picture draws viewers in almost magnetically, persuading them to pray on Hendrick's behalf. Hendrik has done his part, the image implies, and so he beseeches the viewer to do the same.

Middle Dutch prayer books specialize in fine-tuning pleas for mercy from God, usually routed through an intercessor, mainly Jesus, Mary, or a saint, but sometimes an object such as the crucifix, nail, or sudarium. The grammar and syntax of prayer usually reiterate the participants' relative status in the hierarchy. The penitent often rehearses his or her understanding of the suffering that conferred martyrdom upon the heavenly figure who holds the power, thereby calling attention to a higher power's effectiveness or authority ('By the power of your wounds' or 'By your conviction and martyrdom, through which you earned God's ear') then ask for some act of grace ('Please protect me [...]').

The successful completion of the performative speech act of prayer yielded salvation—usually not complete salvation, but small amounts of grace parcelled out in variably sized packages. Rubrics continually reminded their readers: 'Anyone who reads the following prayer will receive 40 days' indulgence' or, 'If you read the following prayer with contrition, you will release five souls from Purgatory'. Toward the end of the century, in their descriptions of the proper conventions, their long-winded testimonials, their legalistic jargon regarding the size and authenticity of indulgences, rubrics swelled. Their claims amplified steadily, as they promised that ever-increasing numbers of souls would be released from Purgatory, or that the semi-eternity of Purgatory would be truncated by tens of thousands of years. The size of these claims grew commensurately with the size of the rubrics themselves. They took up increasing amounts of space on the page in order to describe the wide range of benefits that prayer offered.

Dutch Manuscript Leaves in the Emory Collection

Three of the four Dutch leaves in the Emory collection contain extensive rubrics and prayers that can be described in the categories enu-

merated above. Although I shall designate them Leaves A, B, C and D, they are unnumbered in the Emory collection.¹¹ Leaves A and B [Figs. 3 and 4] come from a single manuscript. Leaves C [Fig. 5] and D [Fig. 6] were each cut from two different manuscripts. Leaf D contains a folio from a calendar and therefore has no prayer texts. All three of the source manuscripts from which these leaves were cut were made in Delft. Dealers in the twentieth century presumably destroyed them in order to flog them, leaf by leaf, possibly because the rubricated script looks festive and decorative and could hang in a frame as a colourful independent painting. Perhaps the leaves (and the manuscripts from which they were cut) also had aesthetic appeal for their fifteenth-century beholders; but of more interest to the current discussion is the question of how the three rubrics shaped responses to images and claimed authority for their stipulation that prayer take place in the presence of an image. The decorator has met this charge by supplying diminutive devotional images in the margins of the books.

Leaf A

Leaf A contains a prayer to be said to the face of Christ, prefaced by this rubric:

rub: Anyone who looks upon the image of the vernicle with devotion receives from the pope in Rome 300 days' indulgence, and he will not die a sudden or bad death that day. A prayer to the face of Christ. *Inc:* Hail, holy face of our redeemer in which the gift of divine light has been pressed in a garment that was clean as snow [...]¹²

¹¹ The leaves are not numbered in the collection; only the *photographs* of the leaves are numbered. Photo 7023 and photo 7024 are the recto and verso of Leaf A. Photo 7025 and 7026 are the recto and verso of Leaf B. Photo 7029 and 7039 are the recto and verso of Leaf C. Photo 7041 and 7042 are the recto and verso of Leaf D. Leaves A and B came from the same manuscript, which was foliated before it was broken up. Leaves C and D come from different books of hours from Delft; neither of their parent manuscripts was foliated before being broken up.

¹² 'rub: Soe wie dat beelde vanden veronica ansiet miet devocien heeft vanden paeus van roemen iii^c dagen oflaets. Ende hi en sterft niet bynnen dien dage onversienre noch quader dood. Een gebet totten aenscijn Christe. *Inc:* Sijt ghegruet heilich [v] aenschiuin ons verlosser daer in blict die gedaente des godlyken lichts in gedruct in enen cledekiin dat scoen was als die snee [...]. Loose leaf, Pitts Theological Library, Atlanta, Leaf A, recto. The parent manuscript, containing 147 folios, was sold at Sotheby's London on 10 July 1973, Lot 72. It was sold again at Christie's on 25 June 1986, Lot 201. According to the Lawrence J. Schoenberg Database of Manuscripts, the manuscript was dismantled by Bruce Ferrini. Six folios from this manuscript were

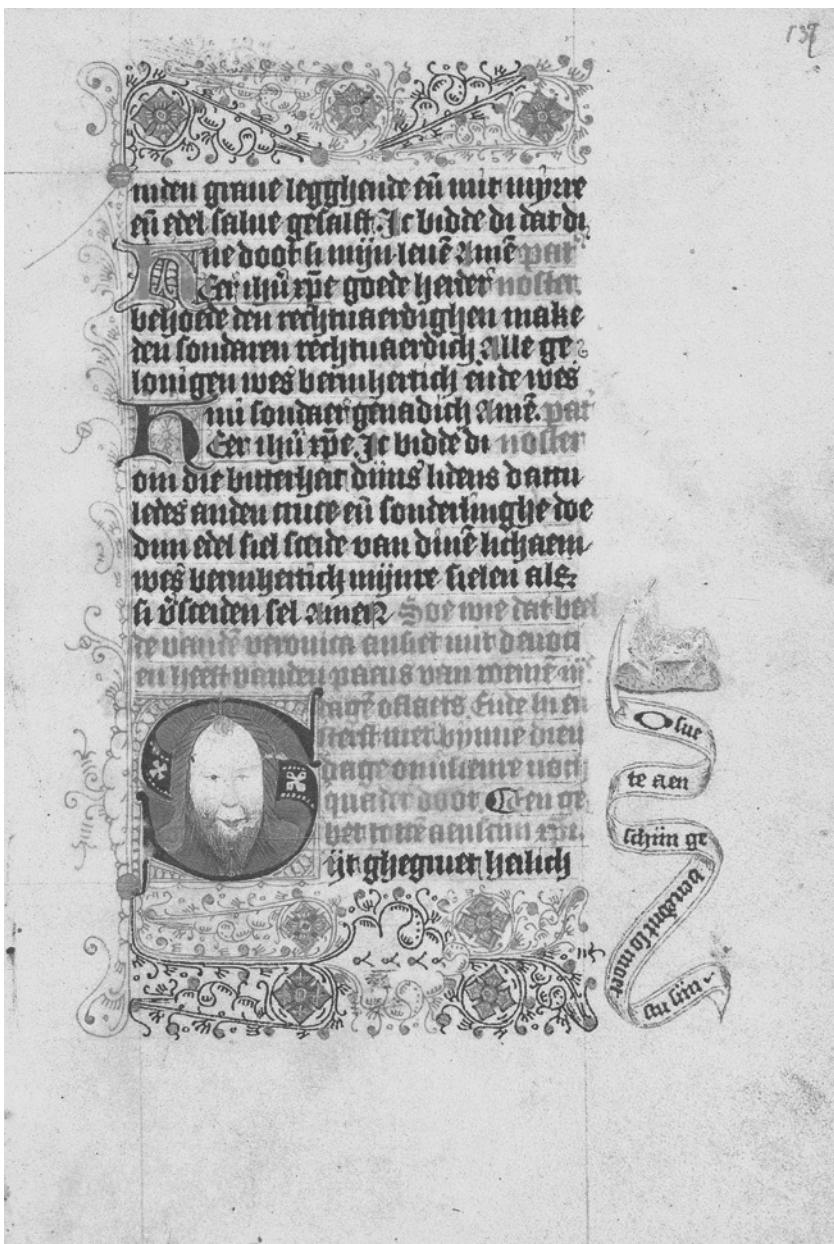


Fig. 3. [COL. PL. XII] Rubric and prayer to the Holy Face of Christ, with historiated initial. Loose leaf from a book of hours made in Delft, ca. 1470. Manuscript on parchment. Pitts Theological Library, Atlanta, unnumbered. Here called Leaf A. Image: Pitts Theological Library.



Fig. 4. Rubric and prayer to the Five Wounds of Christ, with an angel in the margin holding a shield bearing the Five Wounds. Loose leaf from a book of hours made in Delft, ca. 1470. Manuscript on parchment. Pitts Theological Library, Atlanta, unnumbered. Here called Leaf B. Image: Pitts Theological Library.

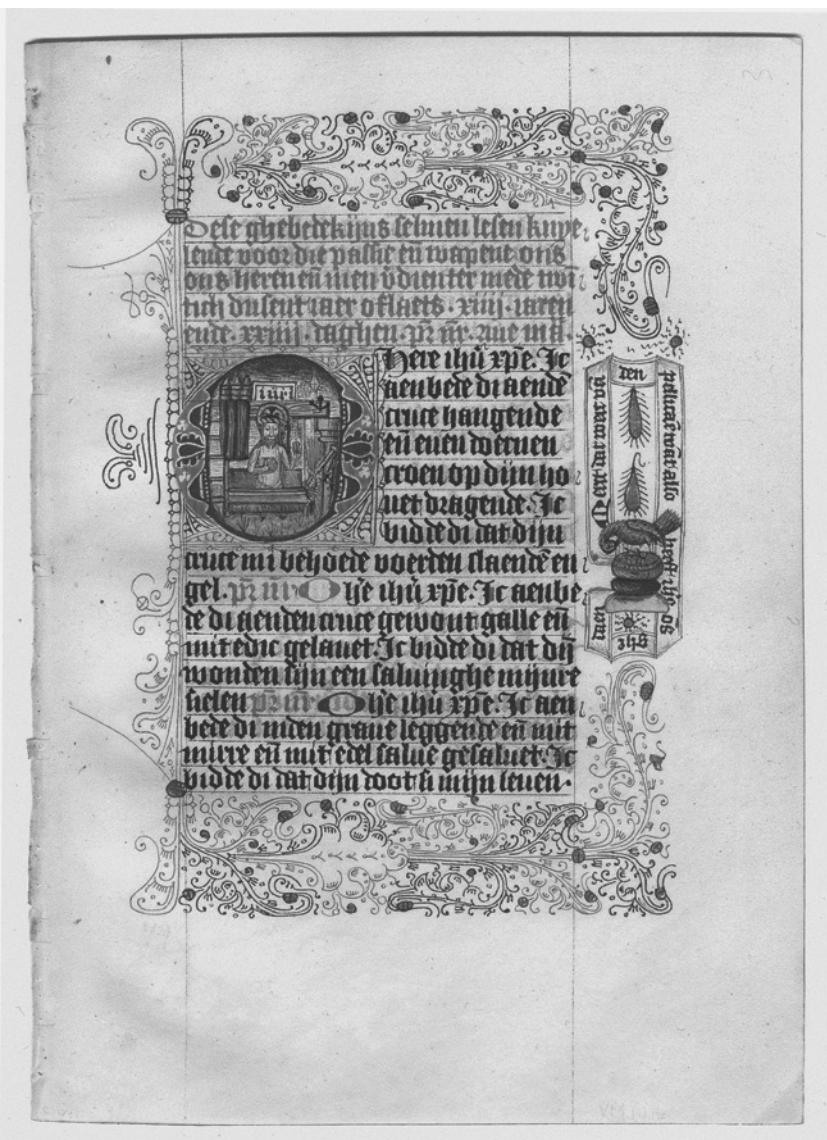


Fig. 5. [COL. PL. XIII] Rubric announcing an indulgence, and Middle Dutch translation of the 'Adoro te', with historiated initial depicting Christ as Man of Sorrows surrounded by the *arma Christi*. Loose leaf from a book of hours made in Delft, ca. 1470. Manuscript on parchment. Pitts Theological Library, Atlanta, unnumbered. Here called Leaf C. Image: Pitts Theological Library.

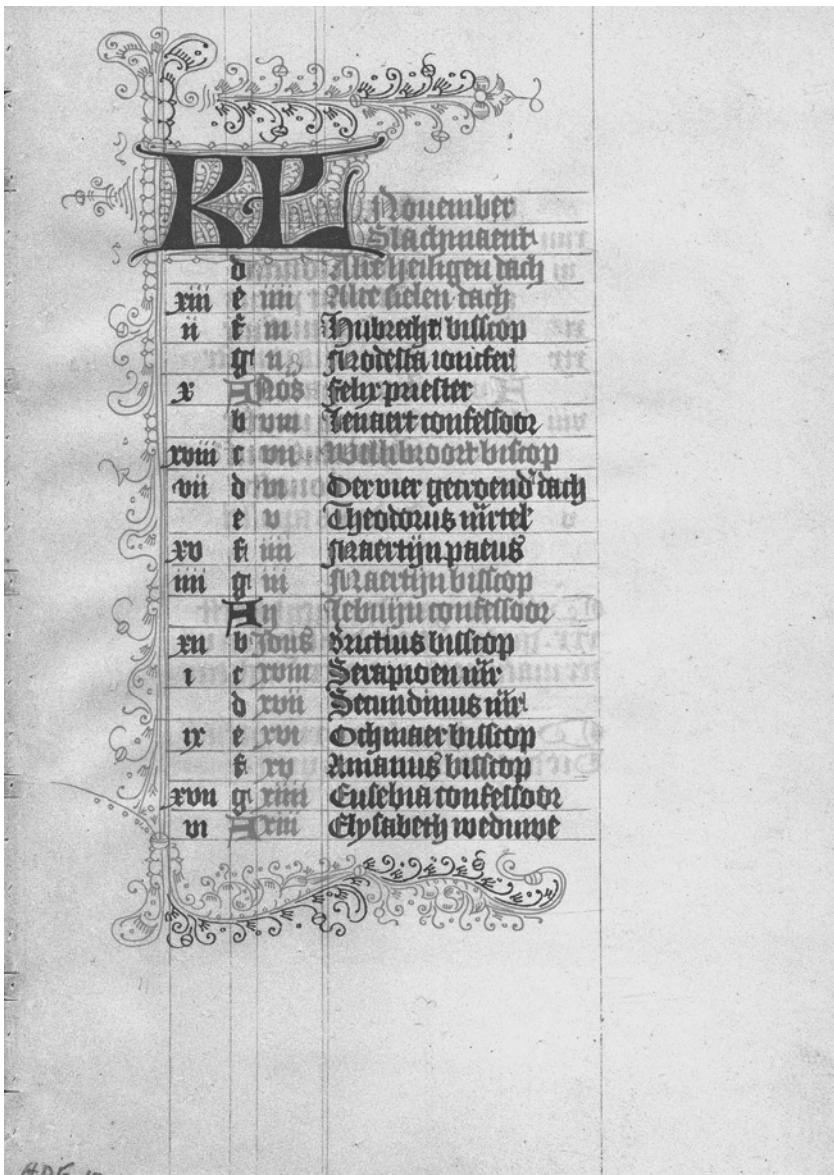


Fig. 6. Calendar page for November, Delft, ca. 1475–1490. Loose leaf from a book of hours made in Delft, ca. 1470. Manuscript on parchment. Pitts Theological Library, Atlanta, unnumbered. Here called Leaf D. Image: Pitts Theological Library.

The accompanying prayer is a translation into Middle Dutch of the *Salve sancta facies*, the earliest prayer to be tethered to both a rubric purporting an indulgence and to an image claiming to activate the prayer. In 1216, Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) composed a prayer about the Holy Face – the image miraculously wrought on Veronica's veil and kept as a relic in St. Peter's in Rome. The pope promised ten days' indulgence for reciting the prayer in front of the image. In the following century, Pope Innocent IV (r. 1243–1254) granted forty days' indulgence to another prayer appended to the image. John XXII (r. 1316–1334), following suit, composed the *Salve sancta facies* and then promised 10,000 days' indulgence for reciting it in front of the Veronica. Two versions of this hymn emerged in Latin, consisting of either 24 or 32 rhyming lines, and various versions and permutations were translated into vernaculars including Dutch.¹³ The point here is that the prayer and its accompanying indulgence had a phased genesis, for which the indulgence swelled with each pope's manipulation.

The rubric requires that the reader not only be in the presence of an image of the True Face of Christ, but also look at it with devotion. The rubric instructs the votary not only what to do, but also how to feel. These criteria fulfil the requirements of the indulgence, and only the reader/viewer would know if the specifications of the contract had been met. Only a fraction of copies of this prayer include the image that is a precondition for earning the stated indulgence. The illuminator of this leaf has painted the True Face of Christ into the initial of the prayer, thereby further binding the image to the structure of the words. The rubric of course does not make any claims that the reader must see the original; in fact, a copy was just as efficacious, which is why so many purported copies of Veronica's veil exist. Readers

sold at Sotheby's on 10 December 1996, Lot 10. Only two folios of the manuscript are currently accounted for: they are in collection of illuminated manuscript leaves, RG 020-2, Archives and Manuscripts Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University (the individual leaves are not numbered).

¹³ Chevalier U., *Reperoritium hymnologicum. Catalogue des chants, hymns, proses, séquences, tropes en usage dans l'église latine depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours*, 6 vols. (Leuven: 1841–1923) no. 18189–18190; Leroquais V., *Les Livres d'heures manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, 3 vols. (Paris: n.p., 1927) vol. II, 349–350, transcribes the 24-line version. For the Middle Dutch versions, see Mulder H. – Deschamps J., *Inventaris van de Middelnederlandse handschriften van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België* (Brussels: 1998–), prayer G117; editions exist in Pearson 1887, 67–68; Meertens M., *De godsvrucht in de Nederlanden: naar handschriften van gebedenboeken der XV^e eeuw*, 4 vols. (Leuven: 1930–34) vol. II, 76–78.

of unillustrated copies of the prayer would have to supply an image in another medium, such as a panel painting. Jan van Eyck's *Face of Christ* [Fig. 7], which survives only in copies, would certainly have met the requirement. The frontal face of Christ in the initial, with its long oval contour, receding hairline, and bifurcated beard, recalls Jan van Eyck's *Face of Christ*, an image that may have originally functioned as a devotional aid for this prayer and served as a model for numerous Netherlandish copies that were made in various media.

The prayer was translated into Middle Dutch several times, so that there were multiple vernacular versions in circulation.¹⁴ A typical rubric prefacing the *Salve Sancta facies* reads:

rub: Anyone who reads this following prayer before that face of Our Dear Lord Jesus Christ, shown in the cloth of Veronica, will earn 10,000 days' indulgence, given by the 22nd pope who is named John. *inc:* Hail, Holy face of our Lord, in which the divine light shines, printed on a cloth white as snow that was given to Veronica as a token of love [...].¹⁵

The prayer falls into the first category enumerated above: names whose utterance partakes of the divine. The prayer reiterates the origin of the vernicle, invokes and addresses it. It also gains its authority by virtue of having been written and ratified by a series of popes.

Sometimes a full-page miniature of the Face of Christ was added to a book opposite the *Salve Sancta Facies*, thereby activating the prayer [Fig. 8]. Such is the case with a manuscript made in Delft in the middle of the fifteenth century that did not originally contain an image; an owner supplied it with a painting that may have been imported from Bruges or elsewhere in the southern Netherlands.

The *Ave facies praeclara*, a prayer included in a Middle Dutch prayer book written by several different nuns in 1477, is both preceded and followed by rubrics [Fig. 9].¹⁶ The first rubric merely titles the prayer

¹⁴ On the Holy Face, see Stracke D.A., "Vereering van het heilig aanschijn in de Nederlanden", *Ons geestelijk erf* XIX (1945) 237–244; Pächt O., "The 'Avignon Diptych' and Its Eastern Ancestry", in Meiss M. (ed.), *De artibus opuscula XL: Essays in Honor of Erwin Panofsky*, (New York: 1961) 402–421, pl. 130–135; Hand J.O., 'Salve sancta facies: Some Thoughts on the Iconography of the Head of Christ by Petrus Christus', *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 27 (1992) 7–18.

¹⁵ New York, Pierpont Morgan Library and Museum, Ms. Stillman 4, fols. 156v–157r.

¹⁶ Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Ms 1340, fol. 119r. Fols. 28r–218v of this manuscript were written by a single hand, with a colophon on the final folio: 'Ich was ghescreven op sinte pauwels avont Inden Jaer xiiii ende lxxvii'.



Fig. 7. Petrus Christus, copy after Jan van Eyck's *Holy Face*, ca. 1445. Oil on parchment, laid down on wood, 14.9 × 10.8 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Lillian S. Timken, 1959.

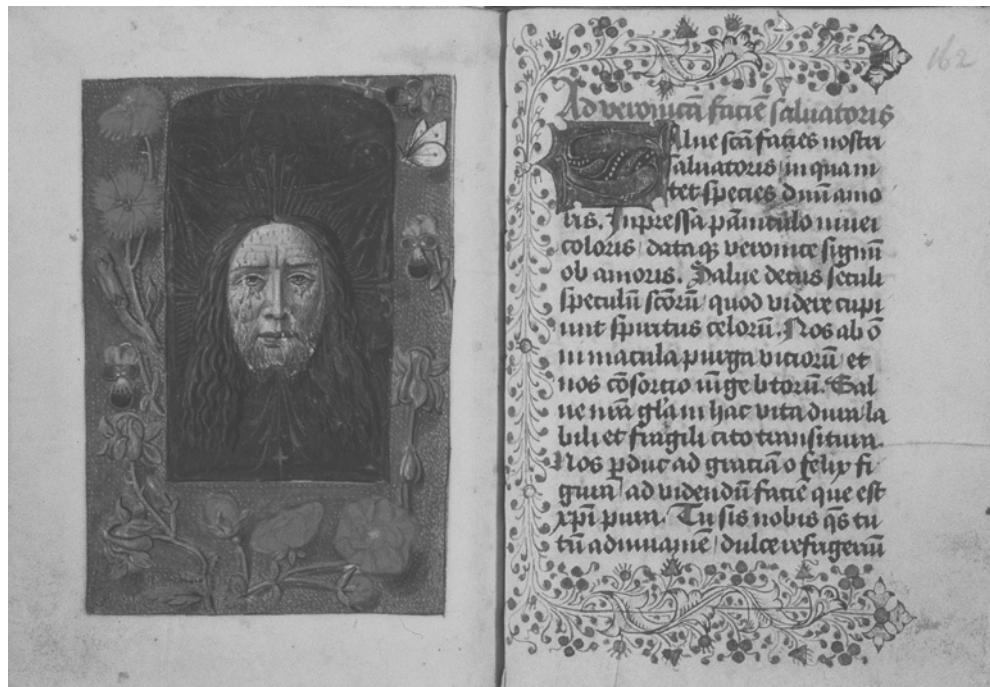


Fig. 8. [COL. PL. XIV] Prayer to the Holy Face, with a full-page painting depicting the Holy Face added in a separate campaign of work. Manuscript: Delft, ca. 1445; image: Southern Netherlands, later fifteenth century. Manuscript on parchment, 115 × 85 mm. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Ms. 74 G 35, fol. 161–162r. Image: Koninklijke Bibliotheek – The National Library of The Netherlands.

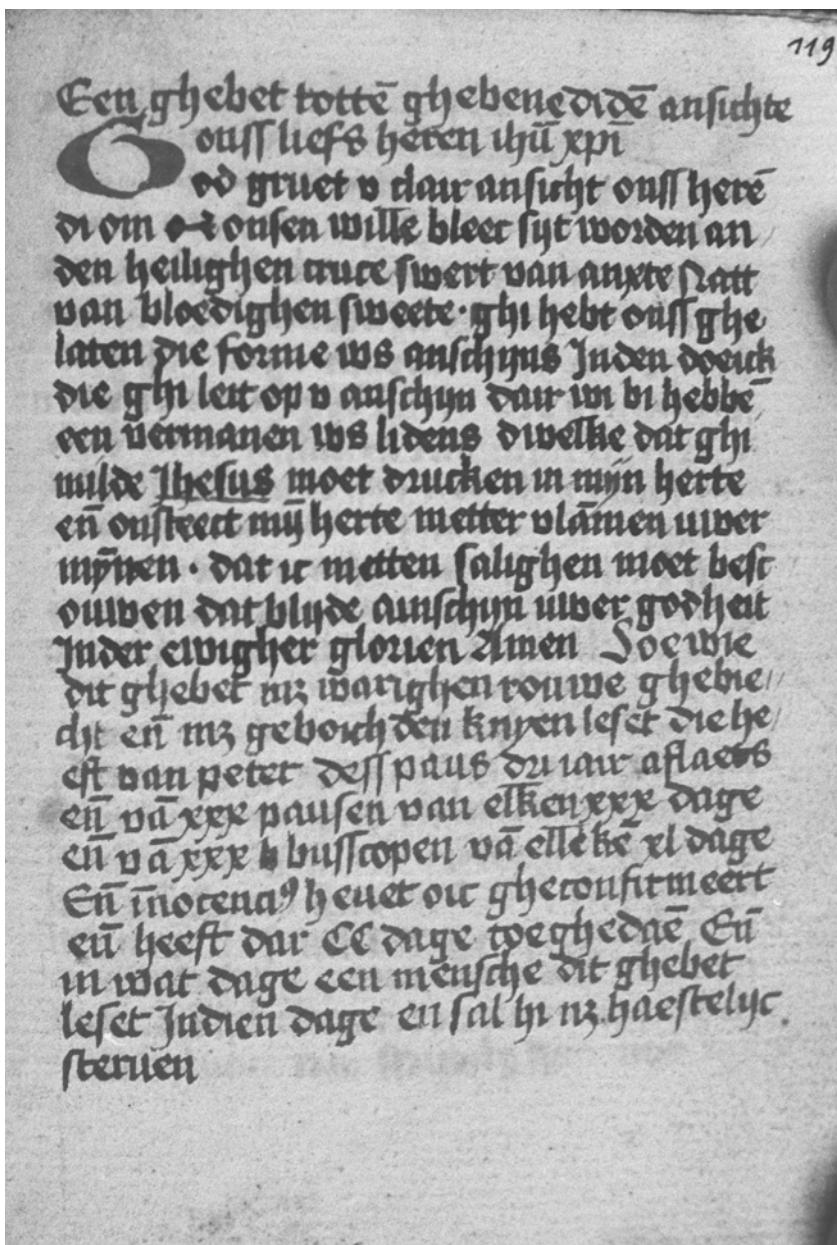


Fig. 9. Prayer to the Face of Christ with announcement of an indulgence, in an unilluminated manuscript. Southern Netherlands, 1477. Manuscript on parchment, 139 × 94 mm. Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Ms 1340, fol. 119r.

Image: Kathryn M. Rudy.

(‘*rub*: A prayer to the blessed face of Our Dear Lord Jesus Christ. *inc*: God gruet u, clair ansicht [...]’).

The postscript rubric, however, provides the instructions:

rub: Anyone who reads this prayer with real contrition and on bent knee, will receive from Peter the pope three years' indulgence as well as 30 days' indulgence from each of 30 popes, and 40 days' indulgence from each of 30 bishops. [Pope] Innocent has also confirmed it and added 200 days' indulgence to it. During the day that a person reads this prayer, he will not die a sudden death.¹⁷

The rubric speaks to a genealogy of authority. Part of the rhetoric of persuasion involved tracing the authority of the indulgence back to Peter, who set the example for thirty popes and thirty bishops to follow, each adding with his words to the value of the indulgence. The most surprising aspect of the rubric, however, is that it promises to prevent sudden death. With the addition of this, the ultimate salubrious benefit, the function of the prayer changes from bringing the reader face-to-face with the godhead to providing a safeguard from sudden death. It shifts focus, in other words, from connection to protection, from being a prayer of entreaty to functioning as an amulet.

Leaf B

Both Leaves A and B in the Pitts Theological Library were cut from the same parent manuscript.¹⁸ Leaf B contains a prayer to the Five

¹⁷ *Rub*: Een ghebet totten ghebenediden ansichte onss liefs heren Jhesu Christi. *Inc*: God gruet u clair ansicht...[then, another rubric at the bottom of the page] *rub*: Soe wie dit ghebet met warighen rouwe ghebiedit ende mit geboichden knyen leset, die heeft van Peter dess paus dri jaer afalets, ende van xxx pausen van elken xxx dage, ende van xxx busscopen van elleken xl dage. Ende Innocencius hevet oic gheconfirmeert ende heeft dar cc dage toeghedaen. Ende in wat dage een mensche dit ghebet leset, inden dage en sal hi niet haestelijc sterven. Ghent, UB, ms 1340, fol. 119r.

¹⁸ Through documentation in the Witt photographic library at the Courtauld Institute in London, I was able to identify the parent manuscript from which these two leaves were cut. The manuscript was whole when it was sold at Sotheby's in London on 10 July 1972 as lot 72. The manuscript was photographed at that time, and some of these photos document the litany. The litany lists St Ursula first among the virgins, which was a place where copyists could emphasize local patronage to specific saints. The script and decoration are consistent with production of Delft in the second half of the fifteenth century. It is likely that the manuscript was written by Franciscan sisters at the convent of St. Ursula in Delft (founded in 1454 or 1457). This attribution also is consistent with the manuscript's content, as far as I was able to study it from the fragmentary photographs.

Wounds of Christ. The accompanying rubric begins *in medias res*, as the beginning of the rubric was inscribed on the previous, now lost, leaf:

Rub: [...] the plague reigned. Anyone who reads these five little prayers daily in the honor of the holy Five Wounds of our dear lord shall be especially protected by God from sudden death and will earn an indulgence of 500 years and seven quarantines. To the wound of the right hand. Pater noster. Ave maria. *Inc:* Hail, holy wound of the right hand of my dear lord Jesus Christ, who was nailed to the cross with a thick nail with great violence [...]¹⁹

The prayer goes on to address each of the Five Wounds in turn. It also falls into the first category, prayers of supernatural nouns. The invocation of the wounds conveys protection to the utterer. The rubric makes an impressive claim; namely, that anyone who reads the prayer daily in honour of the Five Wounds will be protected from sudden death, and will also receive an indulgence of 500 years. The painter, possibly a Franciscan sister, has embodied this idea by depicting the wounded, disembodied limbs of Christ on a shield.

Because their spiritual leader St. Francis had received the stigmata, Franciscans often included prayers to Christ's Five Principal Wounds in their manuscripts. A related prayer, which also circulated among Franciscans, was the Colnish *Pater Noster*, which was also a prayer to the Wounds of Christ. The *Pater Noster* of course carried immense authority, since Jesus himself was thought to have taught it to his disciples. This devotion divides the *Pater Noster* into fragments, and maps these pieces of text onto the crucified body of Christ, so that the petitioner speaks sections of the prayer *into* each wound, beginning with the nail hole on Christ's left foot. The prayer not only presumes that the votary perform the prayer in front of an image, but that she speak the prayer while in an intimate relationship with the image. The prayer and its accompanying performance involve visually scrutinizing, handling, and even tasting the Savior. The prayer is therefore

¹⁹ 'Rub: [...] die pestilencie seer regneerde. Ende so wie dese ghebeden dagelics devoteliken leest in die eer der heilicher vijf wonderen ons liefs heren die sel bescermt wesen vanden haestighen doot god en woude sonderlinge Ende verdient daer toe vijf hondert iaer olaets ende vij karinen. Totter wonde der rechter hant. Pater noster. Ave maria. *Inc:* Weest ghegruet heiliche wonde der rechter hand mijns liefs heren Ihesu Christi, die mit enen plompen naghel anden cruce ghenaghelt wort mit groter wretheit [...]. Loose leaf, Pitts Theological Library, Atlanta, Leaf B, recto.'

one of entreaty (the first category), but it is woven around words first uttered by persons from sacred history (the second category). Unlike the prayers from the first category discussed above, the Colnish *Pater Noster* does not claim any thaumaturgic benefits.

The prayer not only demands that the votary read it in front of an image, but that she interact with that image. The structure of the prayer reiterates the broken body of Christ. It appears primarily in Franciscan manuscripts, an example of which is the prayer book from 1464 now in the Royal Library in The Hague.²⁰ The first rubric announces the name of the prayer and presents the first phrase of the *Pater Noster*: ‘*rub:* This is the Colnish Pater Noster. *Pater Noster qui es in celis. inc:* O, most merciful father, I, a poor, unworthy sinner, thank you [...].’ Reading toward God the Father, the votary is to speak ‘Our Father who art in Heaven’ in Latin accompanied by a gloss on this phrase in the vernacular. The gloss elevates the Godhead and debases the reader. This position sets the stage for the remainder of the prayer, all of which is directed toward an image of Christ on the Cross:

rub: Now speak into the left foot: ‘*Sanctificetur nomen tuum*’. *inc:* O, my sweet and faithful father, I, a poor, sick, and wounded person, seek and thank you [...]²¹

The votary pronounces the second phrase of the *Pater Noster*, ‘hallowed be thy name’, into the puncture wound of Christ’s left foot. Continuously holding that position, she recites a gloss on the prayer to the ‘father’. By submitting to this ritual the votary undergoes a transformation, casting herself in the position of Jesus praying to his heavenly father at the Garden of Gethsemane awaiting his Passion. The text of the prayer emphasizes the smallness of the petitioner, a lowly, withered, and wounded creature awestruck in the face of God. By referring to herself in the terminology of abasement, the petitioner further conjoins her identity with that of Jesus, both the Jesus in the Garden who is sick, nervous, and sweating blood, and the Jesus on the cross who is suffering a slow death along with excruciating, fatal wounds. The structure of the prayer reinforces the reader’s abjection as the humble penitent begins the prayer at the foot of the cross at Jesus’ feet.

²⁰ The Hague, KB, 131 H 4.

²¹ The Hague, KB, 131 H 4, fols. 48v–55r.

The choreographed prayer continues with fragments of the *Pater Noster* directed to the remaining Principal Wounds:

rub: Now say into the right foot, ‘Adveniat regnum tuum’ [...]

rub: Now into the left hand speak, ‘Fiat voluntas tua’ [...]

rub: Now say to the crowned head, ‘Sicut in celo et in terra’ [...]

rub: Now say to the right hand, ‘Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie’[...]

rub: Now say to the pierced side ‘Et dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris’ [...]

rub: And say ‘et ne nos in ducas in temptationem sed libera nos a malo. Amen’.

The penitent works her way up Jesus’ body, moving from foot to head, and from left to right, from the place of earth to the place of heaven, and from the side of perdition to the side of salvation. The votary reads the segments into the bloody wounds, so that the blood could convey the message of penance directly to Christ’s heart. Significantly, the votary recites the penultimate phrase of the *Pater Noster* – ‘and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us’ – directly into Jesus’ side wound, that is, his heart, the seat of forgiveness.

The prayer’s epilogue fulfils the role that most prefatory rubrics fulfil; it explains what the votary gains by performing the prayer, and further instructs how the prayer is to be performed. It reads:

rub: The more one shoots this prayer with love and devotion into the wounds of our dear beloved Lord Jesus Christ, the sooner one receives more gifts from doing so. And although this prayer may seem distasteful at first, the longer one practices it, the tastier it becomes to him. Amen.²²

The fact that it becomes increasingly ‘tasty’ to the votary closely mirrors the fact that the votary must put her lips to Christ’s wounds, to taste his flesh as an intimate Eucharistic ritual, in the act of reciting the prayer. That she ‘shoots’ the prayer into the wounds suggests that the words can wound, and that she herself participates in Christ’s wounding.²³

²² The Hague, KB 131 H 4, fols. 48v–55r.

²³ Cf. a two-folio spread from the *Rothschild Canticles*, a late thirteenth-century manuscript now in New Haven in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library,

None of the copies of the *Colnish Pater Noster* is illustrated. As Thomas Lentes pointed out in his insightful comments to my paper, votaries might not have used the prayer in conjunction with an image of the crucified Christ, because the structure of the prayer implies a four-nail cross, for which the holes in the left and right feet are distinctly accessible. Instead, they might have used a devotional image more like the one represented in the margin of the Emory Leaf B, in which the wounds with their associated body parts are represented in a quincunx.

Leaf C

The third leaf from the Pitts Theological Library shows the image-prayer-rubric combination that underwent the steepest indulgence inflation: the Mass of St. Gregory, which accompanied a prayer in Latin beginning ‘Adoro te in cruce pendentum’, which was translated into Dutch as ‘O, Here ihesu Christe, ic aenbede di aenden cruce hangende’ or ‘O Lord Jesus Christ, I worship you hanging on the cross’. The rubric reads, ‘One should read these short prayers before the passion and weapons of our lord, and one will thereby earn 20,000 years’ indulgence and 14 years and 22 days. Pater noster. Ave maria’.²⁴ The rubric clearly states the necessary conditions for earning a very large indulgence. The instructions imply that anyone who reads the prayer but not in the presence of the ‘Passion and weapons of our Lord’ will not earn the indulgence worth more than 20,000 years. The leaf was written and decorated in Delft, and the illuminator has supplied the reader with the image necessary to activate the indulgence, namely, Christ as Man of Sorrows, surrounded by the *arma Christi*.

Like the prayer to the Face of Christ, this prayer underwent a phased genesis and a logarithmic increase in the size of its accompanying

Yale University (ms 404, fol. 18v–19). As Jeffrey Hamburger has noted, ‘Rarely has the imagery of wounding love received more dramatic embodiment. Seated on a low bench, the Sponsa thrusts a lance toward the full-length figure of Christ, who turns toward her and, in the traditional gesture of the *ostentatio vulneris*, points to the wound in his side’. Hamburger J.F., *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany*, (New York: 1998) 127–129.

²⁴ ‘Rub: Dese ghebedekijns selmen lesen knyelende voor die passie ende wapene ons ons [sic] heren ende men verdienter mede twintich dusent iaer oflaets, xiiij iaeren ende xxiiij daghen. Pater noster. Ave maria’. Pitts Theological Library, loose leaf, unnumbered. Delft, ca. 1480–1490. Parent manuscript unidentified. Here called Leaf C.

indulgence. Pope Gregory was said to have written the original prayer, consisting of five verses. Several popes after him putatively added verses, and with each textual addition, a succession of pontiffs left their own marks of authorship and authority. The prayer underwent manifold transformations throughout the fifteenth century. It became ever longer, and the indulgence became ever larger.²⁵

I have been discussing the ways in which rubrics argue for the authority of indulgences and for the role of images in activating the prayers. The images themselves assert the authority of the indulgences they proffer, since, increasingly in the fifteenth century, they depict a crowded altar, at which each of the popes and bishops responsible for increasing the indulgence appears as a witness.

A painted image that attests to the authority of the word in this sense is an image of the *Mass of St Gregory* in the Trivulzio Hours, a manuscript painted partly by Lieven van Lathem in or shortly before 1469, where the prayer and its indulgence appear no longer in the private confines of the prayer book but affixed to the public space of the chapel wall [Fig. 10]. Although its minute proportions make it impossible to read, the tablet was probably understood as an indulgence, made public and proclaimed to all. Tablets such as these, consisting of framed words hung in the space of miracles, lent authority to the legitimacy of indulgences, as well as validity to the act of praying before images. The action at the altar depicts the events that validate the original indulgence. A mass performed by Gregory refutes those who had doubted the equivalence between Christ's body and the host. At the moment of the elevation of the Eucharist, everyone present saw that the host had indeed become the body of Christ, thereby allaying any doubts. The image shows all of the liturgical paraphernalia for performing the mass on the altar, alongside a miracle that all witness: Christ has appeared bodily on the altar, and is filling the chalice with his own blood. Those who partake of the Mass of St Gregory through the proxy of such a narrative image not only affirm their belief in the transubstantiation, they also become eligible for a significant reduction of time in Purgatory.

²⁵ On the topic of the Mass of St Gregory, see Lentes T. – Gormans A. (eds.), *Das Bild der Erscheinung. Die Gregorsmesse im Mittelalter*. KultBild. Visualität und Religion in der Vormoderne 3 (Berlin: 2006). See also the forthcoming dissertation by Sanne de Vries, *De gebeden bij de Gregoriusmis in de Lage Landen. Productie, verspreiding en gebruik in handschrift en druk (1450–1550)* (Ph.D. dissertation, Leiden University: 2011).

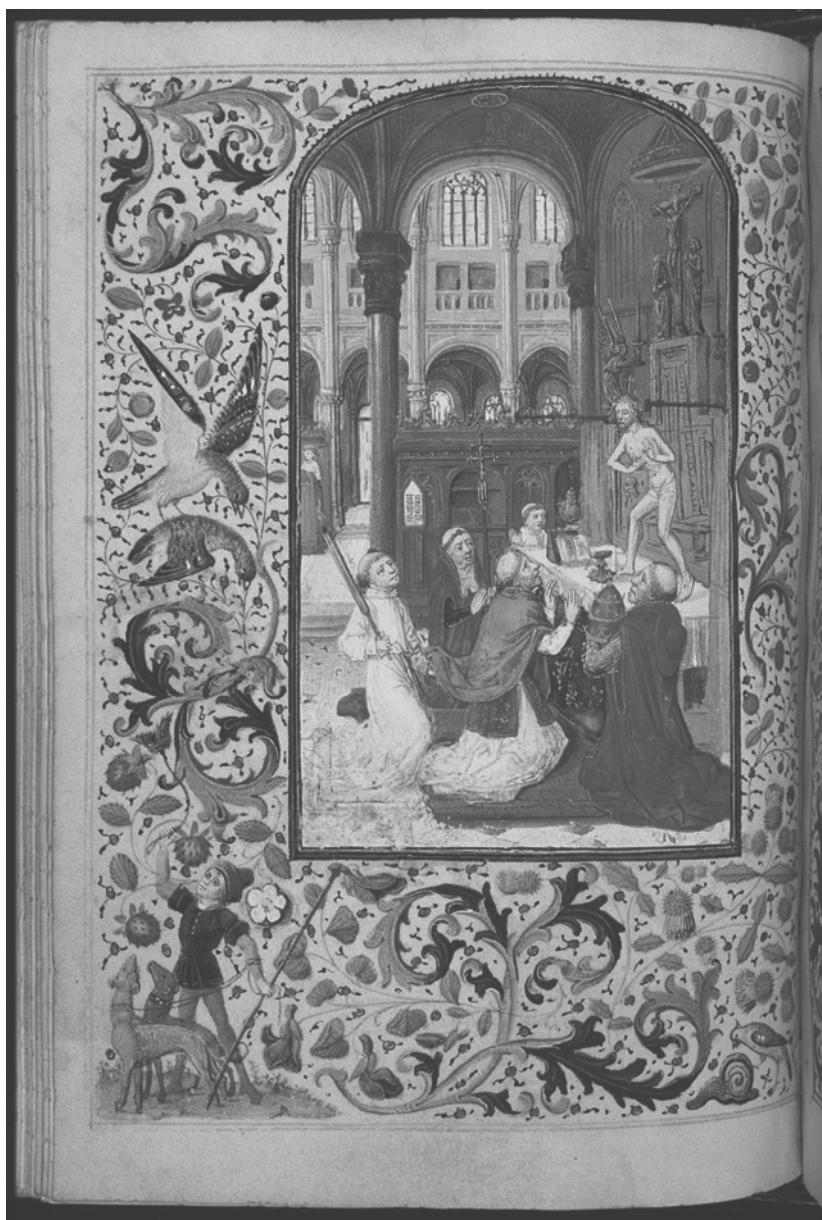


Fig. 10. [COL. PL. XV] Lieven van Lathem, *Mass of St Gregory*. Full-page miniature inserted in the Trivulzio Hours, Ghent ca. 1469. Manuscript on parchment, 130 × 90 mm. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Ms. SMC 1, fol. 103v. Image: Koninklijke Bibliotheek – The National Library of The Netherlands.



Fig. 11a. Full-page miniature depicting the Annunciation, from a Book of Hours, Delft (Convent of St Ursula?), sold at Sotheby's 1972, formerly fol. 47v. Current location unknown. Image: de Witt photographic library, Courtauld Institute, London.

Indulgences for Images of the Virgin

The examples in the Delft fragments from Emory enumerated above all present rubrics and prayers directed toward Christological and passion meditations. Most manuscripts, including perhaps the manuscript from which the Pitts leaves were cut, would have contained Marian prayers that would have similarly been connected to indulgences. Just which Marian prayers it contained remains uncertain, however, because only a few folios of the manuscript were documented before it was sold at Sotheby's. One of the folios that was photographed is

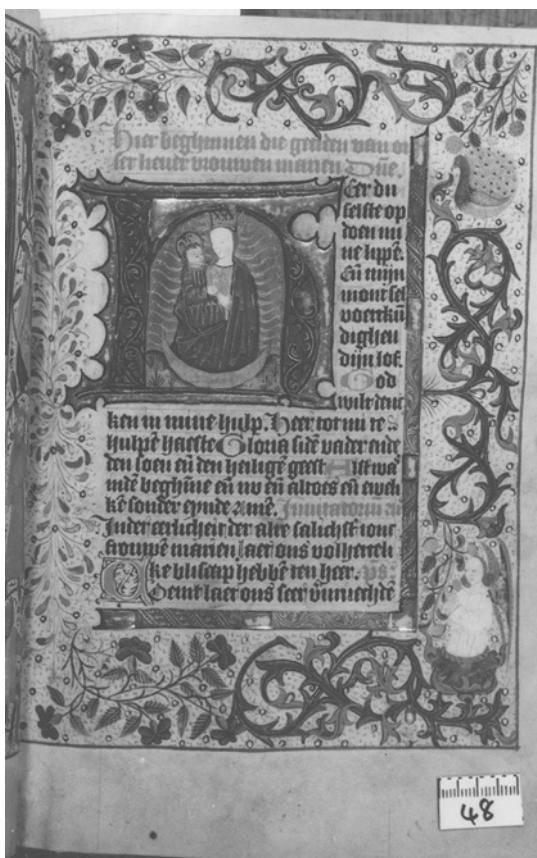


Fig. 11b. Incipit of the Hours of the Virgin, with a historiated initial depicting the Virgin of the Sun, from a Book of Hours, Delft (Convent of St Ursula?), sold at Sotheby's 1972, formerly fol. 48r. Current location unknown. Image: de Witt photographic library, Courtauld Institute, London.

the incipit of the Hours of the Virgin [Fig. 11]. The incipit for that office has a historiated initial depicting the Virgin of the Sun. This iconic image was firmly associated with another indulged prayer, one issued by the Franciscan pope Sixtus IV.

As some of the examples given above attest, the most common way for a prayer to claim legitimacy was by way of a papal indulgence. A prayer to the Virgin, which begins '*Ave, sanctissima virgo Maria*', claimed such authority, as Pope Sixtus IV purportedly indulged it for 11,000 years. The prayer was translated into Dutch several times

and nearly always accompanied a rubric such as one from a manuscript probably made in Brabant:

Rub: The holy father pope Sixtus IV has given 11,000 years' indulgence each time someone reads the following prayer in front of the image of Our Dear Lady in the Sun.²⁶

Part of the prayer's success, however, was certainly due to the image it invariably accompanied. Nearly every copy of the rubric demands that the prayer be read in the presence of the Virgin of the Sun, Standing on the Moon. This image gained currency in the fifteenth century, and became one of the most ubiquitous types of Marian imagery. It even found votaries among the elite of the Netherlands, for example, Catherine of Cleves, who chose the motif for her frontispiece in her eponymous book of hours.²⁷

Pope Sixtus IV's devotion to Mary and his commitment to the prayer *Ave, sanctissima virgo Maria* is the subject of a miniature painted around 1500 by Gerard Horenbout for a Southern Netherlandish Book of Hours [Fig. 12].²⁸ Pope Sixtus appears at a prie-dieu in his bedchamber, praying from a book but casting his attention onto an image on the wall.²⁹ The framed image, depicting the Virgin in Sole with a text underneath, mirrors the shape and structure of the miniature's fictive frame. The pope – kneeling, reading, praying, and gazing – provides a model of correct behaviour before the image. It is likely that images of the Virgin in Sole with the accompanying prayer, circulated outside the confines of prayer books, in the form similar to the one depicted on the wall [Fig. 13].

The framed image on the wall recalls the indulgence tablet depicted on the chapel wall of Lieven van Lathem's Mass of St Gregory. Both tables suggest that prayers with their promised indulgences, sometimes illuminated with their requisite images, circulated separately from prayer books. Several image-prayer combination also circulated as prints, which bound the image, the prayer, and an abbreviated version

²⁶ 'Rub: Die heilige vader die paus Sixtus die iiiii heeft gegeven xi dusent iaeren aflaets soe dicwijs alsmen dese navolghende oracie leest voer onser liever vrouwen beelde inder sonen'. Leeuwarden, Tresoar, Ms 290, fol. 80r.

²⁷ The image has been reproduced frequently, for example in As-Vijvers A.M. (ed.), *From the Hand of the Master: The Hours of Catherine of Cleves* (Antwerp: 2009).

²⁸ London, British Library BL Add. 35313, fol. 237r.

²⁹ Jeanne Nuechterlein discusses private devotional spaces within secular rooms in Nuechterlein J., "The Domesticity of Sacred Space in the Fifteenth-Century Netherlands", in Hamilton S. – Spicer A. (eds.), *Defining the Holy: Sacred Space in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot: 2005) 49–79.



Fig. 12. [COL. PL. XVI] Pope Sixtus IV in prayer before an image of the Virgin, from a Book of Hours. Southern Netherlands (Bruges or Ghent), ca. 1500. Manuscript on parchment. London, British Library, Add. Ms. 35313, fol. 237r.
Image: British Library.

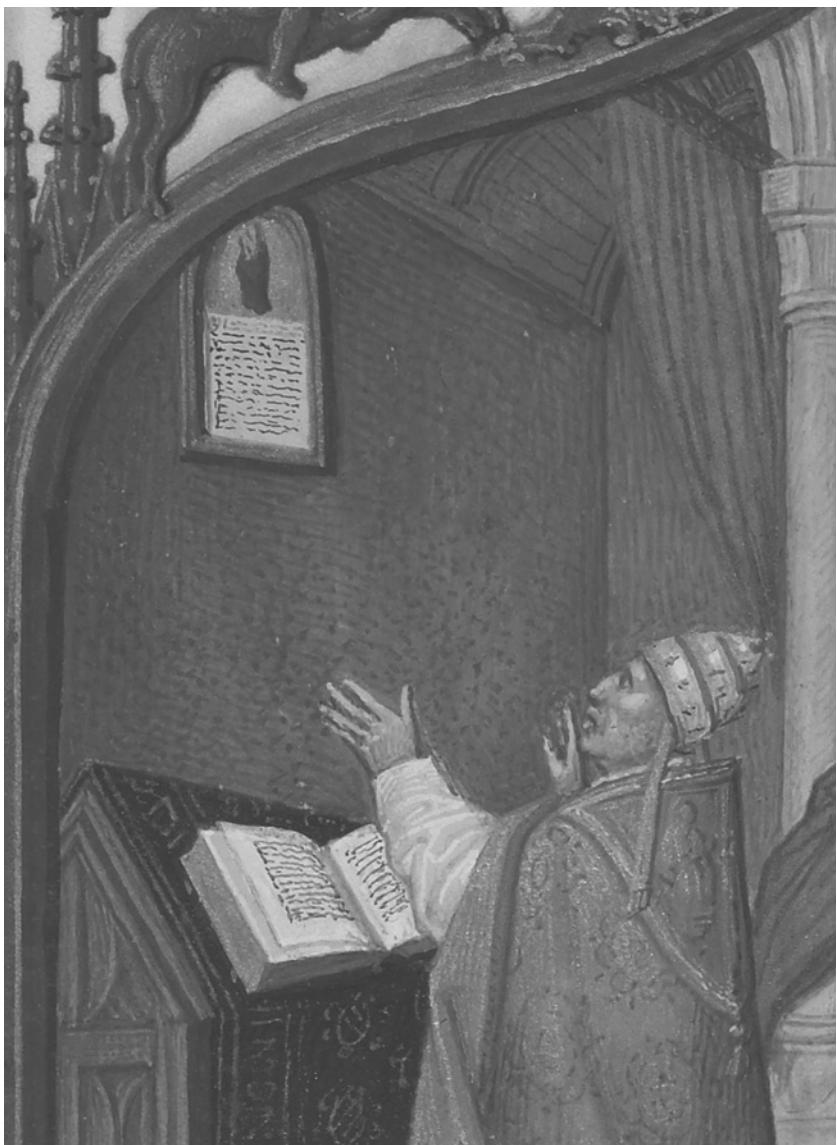


Fig. 13. [COL. PL. XVII] Detail of Pope Sixtus IV in prayer, showing the framed image of the Virgin of the Sun. London, British Library, Add. Ms. 35313, fol. 237r. Image: British Library.



Fig. 14. Indulgenced prayer with image of the Virgin of the Sun. Hand-colored woodcut print, Netherlands, ca. 1500, 89 × 70 mm. London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, inv. no. 1895.0122.10. Image (c) Trustees of the British Museum.

of the rubric together as a single unit. For example, a hand-painted woodcut print depicting the Virgin of the Sun with xylographic text provides a vernacular translation of the prayer to be recited, along with a promise of an indulgence of 11,000 years [Fig. 14]. Anyone possessing basic literacy in the vernacular and a few coins could have access to this prayer and indulgence. Likewise, the Master IAM of Zwolle produced an engraving depicting the Mass of St Gregory witnessed by throngs of onlookers, who peer through the columns and come in from the street [Fig. 15]. Even a little dog looks up at Christ on the altar and scampers away, as if to register the veracity of the miracle. Here the inscription, which provides an abbreviated prayer and an enumeration of the indulgence, is given in Latin. Both the language and the medium of engraving, which was associated with costly metalwork, anticipate a more elite audience than the woodcut in the vernacular. The indulgences were packaged for members of all different social classes, and the images copied with varying levels of skill in a wide variety of media.

Conclusion

In this paper I have presented two kinds of evidence: first, the physical evidence of manuscripts and prints which hold a record (although corrupt and only partially reliable); and second, the more theoretical evidence of the content of those texts and what they mean for our understanding of late medieval practice of devotion. Middle Dutch rubrics, which prescribe devotional activities in the presence of images, forge relationships between indulgences and images even when, as in the case of Ghent UB 1340, the manuscript in which they are inscribed is not illuminated.

This paper has also addressed the loose Dutch manuscripts leaves in the Emory library and has returned them to their original contexts, by virtually returning two of them to their original manuscript homes. Taking account of both physical and cultural context offers insight into the degree to which a quest for indulgences and indulged images permeated the fabric of the pre-Reformation Netherlands. Three of these leaves contain miniaturized representations of indulged images (the Face of Christ, the Wounds of Christ, and the Mass of St Gregory, with the *arma Christi*). These subjects were among the most



Fig. 15. Master IAM of Zwolle, Indulgenced prayer with an image of the Mass of St Gregory, engraving, Netherlands, ca. 1500. London, British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, inv. no. 1850,0713.16.
Image (c) Trustees of the British Museum.

frequently depicted devotional images in the late fifteenth century, due to their attachment to indulgences, as mediated through rubrics. The syntax of the images often reiterates the syntax of the accompanying prayers. For example, the *Adoro te in cruce pendentem* enumerates the *arma Christi*, which appear in many images of the Mass of St Gregory, including the truncated version painted on a minute scale within the historiated initial of Pitts Leaf C. The prayer to the Face of Christ accompanies an image depicting the face in such a way that the votary can meet Christ on the page in a tête-à-tête structured by the prayer, which begins 'Be greeted, holy face of our Lord!' Likewise, the grammar of the *Colnish Pater Noster* forges a structural link with the image of Christ Crucified, whereby segments of the prayer are distributed across his broken body.

Other images, meanwhile, structure appropriate viewer responses by depicting famous ecclesiastics in prayer. These include Horenbout's image of Pope Sixtus IV kneeling in prayer before the Virgin of the Sun Standing on the Moon, and the various images depicting the Mass of St Gregory. Such images present proof, as it were, that the recitation of historical monologues will result in a miracle. In Gregory's case, his utterance of the words 'Hoc est corpus meum' turned the bread of the Eucharist into the living Body of Christ on the altar. In the image depicting Pope Sixtus, the pope provides a testimonial to the effectiveness of praying before images. The authority of these images attests to the authority of the word.

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THE STIGMATA DEBATE IN THEOLOGY AND ART IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

Carolyn Muessig

The reception of the stigmata is a miracle that can be called a thoroughly medieval one as accounts of it are not found in the early church. It was with Francis of Assisi (d. 1226) on Mount La Verna that explicit examples of the miraculous reception of the five wounds of Christ's passion were first documented.¹ With the death of Catherine of Siena in 1380 a more defined discourse emerged which further delineated a theology of the stigmata.² Given the association of Francis with the Franciscans and Catherine with the Dominicans, it is no surprise that these two Orders were intensely involved in the development of stigmatic theology. In this study, the theological contribution of these mendicant families to the question of the stigmata will be examined. Papal bulls, treatises, *vitae* and iconography will be assessed to investigate how stigmata were seen through mendicant eyes. Sermons, however, dating from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries will be the main source

¹ See Dalarun J. et alii, *The Stigmata of Francis of Assisi, New Studies New Perspectives* (St Bonaventure, NY: 2006). For a succinct study on the history of the stigmata in the Middle Ages see: Adnès P., "Stigmates", in Viller M. et alii (eds.), *Dictionnaire de spiritualité, ascétique et mystique, doctrine et histoire*, 17 vols. (Paris: 1932–1995), vol. XIV (1990) 1211–1243. That Francis's stigmata were understood initially to be a physical phenomenon in the Middle Ages has been called into question by Chiara Frugoni. She argues that they were first perceived to be a metaphor for Francis's charity toward and understanding of the passion of Christ, but by the second half of the thirteenth century, owing to the hagiographical glosses by such individuals as Bonaventure, they came to be understood as physical wounds on Francis's body. Frugoni posits that Bonaventure's understanding of the matter was definitively articulated in Giotto's fresco of the stigmatization of Francis of Assisi in the Bardi Chapel (c. 1305). See Frugoni C., *Francesco e l'invenzione delle stimmate. Una storia per parole e immagini fino a Bonaventura e Giotto* (Turin: 1993); Frugoni C., *Francis of Assisi* (London: 1998) 119–147. My article focuses essentially on the later developments of stigmatic theology, not ending with Bonaventure, but beginning with him.

² The first treatise on the stigmata was written by one of Catherine's followers, Tommaso d'Antonio Caffarini. See Pars II, "Tractatus VII: De stigmatibus virginis et de omnibus speciebus stigmatum et proprietatibus seu conditionibus eorundem", in *Libellus de supplemento legende prolixe virginis beate Catherine de Senis*, ed. I. Cavalini and I. Foralosso (Rome: 1974) 121–266.

employed as they encapsulate the core arguments that the Franciscans and Dominicans articulated on this matter.³

Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, minister general of the Franciscan Order (1257–1274), is one of the main shapers of Franciscan stigmatic theology. Through a series of sermons and his *Legenda Maior*, Bonaventure's account of Francis's stigmata became linked with the identity of the Order. In one sermon written around 1262 for the Feast of St Francis, Bonaventure preached:

The Holy Spirit miraculously commanded and confirmed the profession of poverty in this sign, for at the same time that Blessed Francis sought confirmation for his Order from the pope, the stigmata of our Lord were impressed upon him. This was not confirmed by man but by God. Man is able to be deceived and therefore not man alone affixed the bull in the confirmation of this religion [i.e. Franciscanism] in which is the profession of the highest poverty, but the Lord himself wished to affix his bull in the confirmation of poverty, by impressing the stigmata of his passion on the humble and poor Blessed Francis.⁴

But for Bonaventure it was love above all that explained the stigmata. In the same sermon he preached: 'Indeed the cross, or the sign of the cross, impressed on his body signified the love Francis had for Christ crucified; and thus from the heat of this love he was completely transfigured into Christ'.⁵

In addition to his sermons, Bonaventure's description of Francis's reception of the five wounds as presented in the *Legenda Maior* became a widespread authoritative account of the event.⁶ In the *Legenda* (composed between 1260 and 1263), Bonaventure wrote,

³ These sermons, transmitted in Latin through model sermon collections and then preached in the vernacular, circulated widely in western Europe.

⁴ 'Ipse enim mirabiliter in hoc signo professionem paupertatis commendavit et confirmavit; nam eodem tempore, quo beatus Franciscus petiti confirmationem sui Ordinis a Papa, impressa sunt et stigmata Domini nostri. Non fuit ista confirmatio ab homine, sed a Deo. Homo enim decipi potest et ideo non solus homo in confirmatione huius religionis, in qua est professio altissimae paupertatis, apposuit bullam, sed ipse Dominus bullam suam apponere voluit ad confirmationem paupertatis, stigmata sua passionis beato Francisco humili et pauperi imprimendo'. Saint Bonaventure, *Sermones de diversis. Nouvelle édition critique*, 2 vols. (Paris: 1993), vol. II, "Sermo" 58 (771–787) 777–778. For a discussion of dating see 771. Translations are my own unless indicated otherwise.

⁵ 'Crux autem sive signum crucis impressum corpori eius significabat affectum, quem ipse habebat ad Christum crucifixum; et tunc ex illo ardore dilectionis totus fuit transfiguratus in ipsum', see Bonaventure, "Sermo 58" 783.

⁶ See Brooke R.B., *The Image of St Francis. Responses to Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: 2006) 246.

One morning about the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, while he was praying on the mountainside, Francis saw a Seraph with six fiery wings coming down from the highest point in the heavens. The vision descended swiftly and came to rest in the air near him. Then he saw the image of a Man crucified in the midst of the wings, with his hands and feet stretched out and nailed to a cross [...] He was overjoyed at the way Christ regarded him so graciously under the appearance of a Seraph, but the fact that he was nailed to a cross pierced his soul with a sword of compassionate sorrow.

He was lost in wonder at the sight of this mysterious vision; he knew that the agony of Christ's passion was not in keeping with the state of a seraphic spirit which is immortal. Eventually he realized by divine inspiration that God had shown him this vision in his providence, in order to let him see that, as Christ's lover, he would resemble Christ crucified perfectly not by physical martyrdom, but by the fervor of his spirit. As the vision disappeared, it left his heart ablaze with eagerness and impressed upon his body a miraculous likeness. There and then the marks of the nails began to appear in his hands and feet, just as he had seen them in the vision of the Man nailed to the Cross.⁷

Bonaventure's narrative made a clear connection between the vision and the stigmata. This came to replace the earlier Franciscan account put forward by Thomas of Celano's *First Life of Francis*, written in 1228. Thomas's *vita* maintained an ambiguity concerning the man/seraph, never identifying this as Christ. Thomas states that only after the vision disappeared did the wounds begin to develop on Francis's

⁷ English translation from Bonaventure, *The Major Legend of St Francis*, in Armstrong R.J. et alii (eds.), *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, 3 vols. (New York – London: 1999–2001) vol. II *The Founder* (2000) (525–683), chapter 12, 630–631. For the Latin text see *Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae Legenda Maior S. Francisci*, in *Analecta Franciscana*, 10 vols. (Quaracchi: 1926–41), vol. X (1941) (555–652) 616–617: 'Quodam mane circa festum Exaltationis sanctae Crucis, dum oraret in latere montis, vidit Seraph unum sex alas habentem, tam ignitas quam splendidas, de caelorum sublimitate descendere. Cumque volatu celerrimo pervenisset ad aëris locum viro Dei propinquum, apparuit inter alas effigies hominis crucifixi, in modum crucis manus et pedes extensos habentis et cruci affixos [...]. Laetabatur quidem in gratioso aspectu, quo a Christo sub specie Seraph cernebat se conspicere, sed crucis affixio compassivi doloris gladio *ipsius animam pretransibat*. Admirabatur quam plurimum in tam inscrutabilis visionis aspectu, sciens, quod passionis infirmitas cum immortalitate spiritus seraphici nullatenus conveniret. Intellexit tandem ex hoc, Domino revelante, quod ideo huiusmodi visio sic divina providentia suis fuerat praesentata conspectibus, ut amicus Christi praeñosset, se non per martyrium carnis, sed per incendium mentis totum in Christi crucifixi similitudinem transformandum. Disparens igitur visio mirabilem in corde ipsius reliquit ardorem, sed et in carne non minus mirabilem signorum impressit effigiem. Statim namque in manibus eius et pedibus apparere coepérunt signa clavorum quemadmodum paulo ante in effigie illa viri crucifixi conspexerat'.

hands, feet and side. Moreover, Thomas described Francis as confused by the whole event and not at all certain what it meant.⁸ Bonaventure's account of the stigmata provided a more linear narrative than that of Thomas; it became the touchstone for discussions on Francis's stigmata perhaps because it drew a clear connection between the wounds of Christ and the wounds of Francis. Furthermore, Franciscans developed a theology which posited that the reception of the stigmata was a miracle that only Francis could experience owing to the saint's utter conformity to Christ.⁹ Images of Francis as a stigmatic greatly underlined this point as hitherto no other Christian saint had been depicted bearing the stigmata.¹⁰ The wounds marked off Francis and, concomitantly, his Order as unique followers of Christ.

When the Franciscans were consolidating their theology of the stigmata, the Dominicans were beginning to preach sermons on the same subject. One of the most influential positions of the origin of Francis's stigmata was posited by the Dominican preacher Jacopo da Varazze (d. 1298). Well known for his *Legenda aurea*, this Dominican's four homilies on Francis became among the most widespread in the Middle Ages.¹¹ His third sermon on Francis has for its theme the one New Testament usage of the term 'stigmata': 'I bear the stigmata of Lord Jesus Christ on my body' (*Galatians* 6. 17). Similar to Bonaventure,

⁸ Thomas of Celano, *The Life of Saint Francis*, in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, vol. I, *The Saint* (1999), book two, chapter 3, 264: 'Concerned over the matter, he kept thinking about what this vision could mean and his (*Psalm* 143:4) "spirit was anxious" to discern a sensible meaning from the vision. While he was unable to perceive anything clearly understandable from the vision, its newness very much pressed upon his heart. Signs of the nails began to appear on his hands and feet, just as he had seen them a little while earlier on the crucified man hovering over him'. For the Latin see *Thomae de Celano Vita Prima S. Francisci*, in *Analecta Franciscana*, 10 vols. (Quaracchi: 1926–1941), vol. X (1941) (1–117) 72.

⁹ For example, the Franciscan Peter Thomae (d. ca. 1340) in a *quodlibet* argued that Francis alone had received the stigmata and this had been affirmed by the papacy. See Mohan G.E., "Petrus Thomae on the Stigmata of St Francis", *Franciscan Studies* 8 (1948) (285–294) 292.

¹⁰ See Goffen R., *Spirituality in Conflict: Saint Francis and Giotto's Bardi Chapel* (University Park: 1988) esp. 15–20.

¹¹ Jacopo da Varazze's *Sermones de sanctis* are extant in over 200 manuscripts. They are also found in several printed editions from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. For a list of manuscripts and editions see: Kaepeli T. – Panella E. (eds.), *Scriptores Ordinis Praedicatorum Medii Aevi*, 4 vols. (Rome: 1970–1993), vol. II (1975) 359–361; Schneyer J.-B., *Repertorium der lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit von 1150–1350, Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters* 43, 11 vols. (Münster, Westphalia: 1969–1990), vol. III (1971) 266–268.

Jacopo identifies love (*charitas*) as the main reason why Francis bore the stigmata. Within this discussion of love, Jacopo identifies Francis's ardent imagination for the crucified Christ (*vehemens imaginatio*) as one of the causes for the stigmata:¹²

The first [cause] was ardent imagination (*vehemens imaginatio*); that the imagination may imprint is evident in two examples [...] The first is the account of a certain woman who had given birth to an Ethiopian baby, because of this she was suspected by her husband of having an affair; but it was discovered that this happened to her as a result of a certain image of an Ethiopian which she had gazed upon intently. Another example is that when a certain woman had given birth to a baby who looked nothing like her or her husband and because of this it was suspected that she had an affair; but it was found that she had such a painting (which looked like her baby) in her bedroom. [...] If, therefore, Francis in a vision had imagined the crucified Seraph, so great was his imagination that it impressed the wounds of the passion on his flesh.¹³

Jacopo is repeating a long-established understanding of how imagination and desire could influence a person in body and mind. This example is reminiscent of Augustine of Hippo's (d. 430) consideration of the power of the imagination in his *Against Julian* where he discussed the tyrant Dionysius who had a physical deformity. Dionysius did not want his offspring to take after him in this regard, so at the time of intercourse, Dionysius would place before his wife a painting of a handsome man as it was believed that her desire for the painting's

¹² Jacopo posits that the charity in Francis's heart caused the stigmata in his body. He argues, therefore, that there were five things in Francis's heart (*in corde*) which caused Francis to bear the stigmata in his body: 'Primum fuit vehemens imaginatio; secundum fuit vehemens dilectio; tertium fuit vehemens admiratio; quartum fuit vehemens meditatio; quinto fuit vehemens ipsius compassio'. See "Sermo 3: De stigmatibus sancti Francisci", in Jacobus da Voragine (Jacopo da Varazze), *Sermones aurei de praecipuis sanctorum festis*, ed. R. Clutius, 2 vols. (Augsburg – Krakow, 1760), vol. II (322–324) 322–323. For the purposes of this study, I will only dwell on *vehemens imaginatio* as this was an influential aspect of Jacopo's sermon in the subsequent development of stigmatic theology.

¹³ "Sermo 3: De stigmatibus sancti Francisci" 322–323: 'Primum fuit vehemens imaginatio, quod autem imaginatio imprimat, patet per duo exempla [...]. Unum est quod dum quaedam mulier Aethiopem peperisset et ex hoc a viro suspecta haberetur, inventum est hoc sibi accidisse ex quadam imagine Aethiopis, quam ipsa conspexit. Aliud exemplum est, quod cum quaedam mulier filium parentibus omnino dissimilem peperisset et ex hoc suspecta haberetur, inventum est, quod talis imago in cubiculo habebatur [...]. Si ergo Franciscus in visione sibi facta imaginabatur Seraphin crucifixum et tam fortis imaginatio extitit, quod vulnera passionis in carne sua impressit'.

beauty would be imprinted on the foetus.¹⁴ In a similar manner, Francis's burning charity for the beheld crucified seraph imprinted his flesh with the object of his desire.¹⁵

The transformation of Francis's body is identified by Jacopo as deification. Deification (*deificatio*), a concept usually associated with Eastern Christianity (*theosis*) but also found in Western Christianity, is a variable term depending on who uses it. But generally speaking, when used in the medieval West, it suggested that an individual's image and likeness could be reformed and transformed into Christ through the power of grace.¹⁶ In his second sermon on Francis, Jacopo says: 'He [Francis] was completely illuminated, inflamed and deified'.¹⁷ Later in the sermon, Jacopo states: 'He was a divine man [...] He carried the sign of God in his heart through the wound of love'.¹⁸

Jacopo da Varazze's explication of Francis's *vehemens imaginatio* quickly resounded in other preachers' conception of the stigmata. The Dominican Giordano da Pisa (d. 1311), in a sermon preached on 30 November 1304, observed that if individuals focused on the suffering of Christ and the cross, like Francis, they could transform their souls and bodies through assiduous meditation to take on the stigmata. Repeating an idea similar to Jacopo's explanation of Francis's stigmata, Giordano states that it is the mind that does such a thing, for it has the power to change not only the soul but the body.¹⁹ Jacopo's view of the stigmata occurring through *vehemens imaginatio* remained a part of the Dominican understanding of the stigmata throughout the

¹⁴ Augustine, *Against Julian, The Fathers of the Church. A New Translation* 35, trans. M.A. Schumacher (New York: 1957), chapt. 14, par. 51, 292. Jacopo likely knew the passage as he cites later in the same sermon *Against Julian*, chapt. 14, but not the section dealing with Dionysius.

¹⁵ See Boureau A., *Satan the Heretic: The Birth of Demonology in the Medieval West*, trans. T.L. Fagan (Chicago: 2006) 179–185.

¹⁶ See Bardy G., "Divinisation: Chez les pères latins", in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* V (1964) 1390–1398; Fracheboud M.-A., "Divinisation: Moyen Âge, auteurs monastiques du 12^e siècle", in *ibid.* 1399–1413; Conus H.-T., "Divinisation: Moyen Âge, théologiens du 13^e siècle", in *ibid.* 1413–1432; Oechslin, R.-L., "Divinisation: Moyen Âge, école rhénane et flamande", in *ibid.* 1432–1445.

¹⁷ "Sermo 2: Quomodo angelicus, virtuosus, et divinus homo extitit", in Jacopo da Varazze, *Sermones aurei de praecipuis sanctorum festis* vol. II (321–322) 322: 'Totus fuit illuminatus, inflammatus et deificatus'.

¹⁸ "Sermo 2: Quomodo angelicus, virtuosus, et divinus homo extitit" 322: 'Fuit homo divinus [...]. Istud signum portavit in corde per amoris vulnerationem'.

¹⁹ The sermon was preached in Santa Maria Novella in Florence. See Giordano da Pisa, *Avventuale fiorentino* 1304, ed. S. Serventi (Bologna: 2006) 112–113.

Middle Ages. However, with the death of Catherine of Siena in 1380, the Dominicans began to explore the possibility of alternative forms of stigmatization.

Catherine of Siena, often best remembered for her extreme fasting, was also a stigmatic. Her reception of the stigmata was reported to have occurred in the church of Santa Cristina in Pisa in 1375 after having received communion from her confessor and soon to be hagiographer, the Observant Dominican, Raymond of Capua (d. 1399). In his *vita* on Catherine, Raymond reports her description of the moment of this event:

I saw the Lord fixed to the cross above me descending in a great light. Because of the impulse of my mind and my will to meet its creator, my body was compelled to rise up. Then from the scars of his most sacred wounds I saw five bloody rays descending towards my hands, my feet and my heart. Wherefore, perceiving the mystery, I quickly exclaimed, 'O my Lord God, I beg you, do not let these scars show externally on my body'. As I was saying this, before the rays had reached me their color changed from blood red into brilliant light, and in the form of pure light the rays reached the five places of my body, namely my hands, feet and heart.²⁰

The exchange of words between Christ and Catherine just before the stigmatization indicate that Catherine's stigmata were rendered invisible. However, the stigmata on Catherine's hands can be seen in the earliest extant image of her by the painter Andrea Vanni (d. 1413/14), a friend and contemporary of the saint [Fig. 1].²¹ The seeming contradiction of depicting the invisible stigmata as visible, however, was a method we will see which met with both acceptance and resistance

²⁰ Raymond of Capua, *Vita S. Catharina Senensis*, AASS, Apr. III, Dies 30 (Antwerp, 1675) 2.7, col. 901F: '[V]idi cruci affixum, super me magno cum lumine descendentem: propter quod ex impetu mentis, volentis suo creatori occurrere, corpusculum coactum est se erigere. Tunc ex sacratissimorum ejus vulnerum cicatricibus quinque in me radios sanguineos vidi descendere, qui ad manus et pedes et cor mei tendebant corpusculi: quapropter advertens mysterium, continuo exclamavi: "Ha, Domine Deus meus, non appareant obsecro cicatrices in corpore meo exterius". Tunc adhuc me loquente, antequam dicti radii pervenissent ad me, colorem sanguineum mutaverunt in splendidum; et in forma puræ lucis venerunt ad quinque loca corporis mei, manus scilicet, et pedes, et cor'.

²¹ For further information on Vanni and the fresco see Bianchi L. – Giunta D., *Iconografia di S. Caterina da Siena* (Rome: 1998) 155–158.



Fig. 1. Andrea Vanni, *Saint Catherine of Siena and a Devout Woman*. Fresco. Basilica of San Domenico, Siena, Italy, ca. 1380. With kind permission of Il Prefetto della Provincia di Siena.

in the struggle to understand the theological phenomenon of invisible stigmata in words and in images.²²

Tommaso d'Antonio Caffarini (d. 1434) played a key role in having Catherine's invisible stigmata depicted in written and visual sources. This Sienese Observant Dominican led the campaign to have Catherine canonized. In the mid 1390s Caffarini became overseer of the nuns at the Corpus Christi convent in Venice.²³ He and some fellow Observant Dominicans displayed intense support for Catherine through preaching and the production of artistic images. Caffarini's endeavours resulted in the Bishop of Venice's investigation, started in 1411 and completed in 1417, to establish the sanctity of Catherine of Siena. The enquiry produced the prolix *Processo Castellano* which subsequently became the basis for Catherine's canonization in 1461.²⁴ In the *Processo* Caffarini argued that Catherine should be commemorated in word and image. He reported that representations of her circulated through parts of Poland, Germany, Greece, Romania, Dalmatia, Tuscany and Lombardy as well as in the cities of Venice and Rome. These images were found on plaques, walls, documents, cloths and in manuscripts.²⁵

²² For an overview of Catherine of Siena's stigmata in art see: Giunta D., "La questione delle stimmate alle origini della iconografia catarinana e la fortuna del tema nel corso dei secoli", in *Con l'occhio e col lume. Atti del corso seminariale di studi su s. Caterina da Siena*, 25 Settembre-7 Ottobre 1995 (Siena: 1999) 319–347. For an abridged and updated English translation of Giunta's article see "The Iconography of Catherine of Siena's Stigmata", in Muessig C., Ferzoco G. and Kienzle B. (eds.), *A Companion to Catherine of Siena* (Leiden: in press).

²³ Freuler G., "Andrea di Bartolo, Fra Tommaso d'Antonio Caffarini, and Sienese Dominicans in Venice", *Art Bulletin* 69 (1987) (570–586) 572. Tylus J., *Reclaiming Catherine of Siena: Literacy, Literature and the Signs of Others* (Chicago – London: 2009) 55.

²⁴ For an edition see *Il Processo Castellano. Con appendice di documenti sul culto e la canonizzazione di S. Caterina, Fontes Vitae S. Catharinae Senensis Historici* 9, ed. Laurent M.-H. (Milan: 1942). For a discussion of the *Processo* see Ferzoco G., "The Canonization of Catherine of Siena", in *A Companion to Catherine of Siena*.

²⁵ Caffarini's testimony states: 'Quemadmodum autem in dictis orbis partibus odor vite et doctrine virginis diffusus fore dignoscitur, ita et imago eiusdem, communiter depicta more beatarum ab ecclesia nondum solemniter canonizatarum, multipliciter in diversis provinciis reperitur, prout de pluribus fore in remotis partibus fide digna relatione percepit, et de quampluribus propriis vidi luminibus, utpote Polonie, Theutonie, Grecie sive Romanie Dalamtie sive Sclavonie, Thuscie et Lombardie, et signanter in civitate Venetiarum, ac Rome et Apulie, aliquis diversis locis christianitatis, et hoc aut in tabulis, aut in muris sive in cartis, sive in pannis ac etiam libris; sicque per hoc non solum ad loca fidelium, sed etiam infidelium, prout michi constat, per fideles virginis percipua devotione affectos ymagos virginis deportatur tam per mare quam per terram', see *Il Processo Castellano* 92–93.

Contained in his *Libellus de Supplemento*, a work which was to serve as a complement to Raymond of Capua's *vita* of Catherine of Siena completed around 1418,²⁶ Caffarini wrote a treatise on stigmata. Here he claimed that Catherine and several other individuals, particularly those associated with the Dominicans, had received the stigmata. Caffarini underlined that there were many sorts of stigmata, not just one type. In order to convey these differences, it was crucial to portray the nuances of each stigmatic reception iconographically. Caffarini argued, therefore, that the images of stigmatic saints were not to be embellished or diminished but should correspond to their *legenda*.²⁷ He focuses on Catherine of Siena and Francis of Assisi, but also to some degree on the Dominicans Walter of Strasbourg (d. 1264) and Helen of Hungary (d. 1285). Caffarini informs us that despite written descriptions which explain how these men and women received the stigmata, he has seen images of them painted 'not without defect' ('non sine aliquali defectu'). Therefore, he will provide drawings of the four saints which will make the truth of their stigmata more evident.²⁸ We will see, however, that how one presented "a literal reading" of a text in a visual medium could vary.

As Caffarini promised, the images of the four saints are found in two extant manuscripts of the *Libellus de supplemento*: Siena, Biblioteca comunale degli Intronati T.I.2 and Bologna, Biblioteca universitaria 1574 [Fig. 2].²⁹ These manuscripts and their drawings were produced under Caffarini's supervision in the Venetian scriptorium of the church of San Giovanni and Paolo.³⁰ For the purposes of the present study, the analysis will rely on Bologna, Biblioteca universitaria 1574, which is believed to have been produced after the Siena manuscript

²⁶ Caffarini, *Libellus*, "Prologus" 1.

²⁷ Caffarini, *Libellus* 155.

²⁸ Caffarini, *Libellus* 181.

²⁹ In addition to these four saints, Caffarini briefly discusses several other saints whom he identifies as bearing various types of stigmata; the Siena and Bologna manuscripts contain drawings of all these saints with their particular stigmata. These saints include, Paul of Tarsus, Clare of Assisi, Clare of Montefalco and Birgitta of Sweden, among others.

³⁰ For previous studies on these manuscripts and their images see Mongini M.A., "Il ruolo dell'immagine nei due codici del 'Libellus de supplemento Legende prolixe virginis Beate Catherine de Senis'", *Roczniki humanistyczne* 45 (1997) 179–205; and Moerer E.A., "Catherine of Siena and the Use of Images in the Creation of a Saint, 1347–1461", (PhD dissertation, University of Virginia: 2003). Caffarini oversaw but did not execute the drawings himself. In recent scholarship the drawings have been attributed to Cristoforo Cortese. See Moerer, "Catherine of Siena" 46–47; 52.



Fig. 2. Cristoforo Cortese (?), *Four Saints Receiving the Stigmata: Francis of Assisi, Helen of Hungary, William of Strasbourg and Catherine of Siena*. Taken from: Tommaso Caffarini, *Libellus de supplemento legende [...] beate Katherine de Senis*, Manuscript Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, 1574, parchment, sec. XV¹, fol. 29r. With kind permission of the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna.
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and perhaps reflects a more developed view of how Caffarini perceived Catherine and other stigmatics should be visually represented.³¹

As indicated above, Caffarini stipulates that *legenda* should be the primary guide for iconographical depictions. But Caffarini does not always view written sources as entirely prescriptive. For example, he stresses that Catherine's wounds were described as invisible in her *legenda* yet the hand and side wounds are clearly visible in the Bologna drawing [Fig. 3]. Elsewhere in the treatise Caffarini emphasizes that Catherine's stigmata should be depicted as directly received from Christ via rays without the mediation of a seraph as indicated in the *legenda*; here the Bologna image follows on faithfully from the text.³²

Caffarini's simultaneous adherence to some textual precedents and disregard of others can also be found in how Francis's wounds are presented iconographically. For example, Caffarini insists that only the side wound of Francis was described as bloody.³³ He also stresses that in the written sources there is no discussion of any rays striking Francis's body.³⁴ The Bologna manuscript, nevertheless, portrays red rays shooting from the man/seraph to Francis, while only Francis's side wound is bloody [Fig. 4]. Despite Caffarini's initial wish to adhere to the written sources, he toggled back and forth between textual and visual precedents and chose what he thought appropriate.

Caffarini's idiosyncratic depiction of stigmata was tied to his understanding that they could be diverse, a diversity which evidently could not be restricted by a close adherence to the text alone as that could compromise the theological nuances of each stigmatic reception. But in his endeavor to preserve the differences a hierarchy is implied whereby some stigmata were more splendid than others. For example his description of the context and origin of Catherine's stigmatic reception demonstrates a superior event when compared to Francis's circumstances:

In regard to the first point, that is the cause and origin of the stigmata in blessed Francis, it seems that this was the representation of the Lord's

³¹ See Mongini, "Il ruolo" 191.

³² Caffarini, *Libellus* 178.

³³ For images of Francis with bloody hands and feet see Frugoni, *Francesco e l'invenzione delle stimmate*, figures 4, 10, 27.

³⁴ Caffarini, *Libellus* 180. The use of rays were used widely in iconographical depictions of Francis receiving the stigmata. For this iconographical development see Frugoni, *Francesco e l'invenzione delle stimmate*.



Fig. 3. Cristoforo Cortese (?), *Catherine of Siena Receiving the Stigmata*. Detail from *Four Saints Receiving the Stigmata: Francis of Assisi, Helen of Hungary, William of Strasbourg and Catherine of Siena*, in Tommaso Caffarini, *Libellus* [...], Manuscript Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, 1574, parchment, sec. XV¹, fol. 29r. With kind permission of the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna.

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Fig. 4. Cristoforo Cortese (?), *Francis of Assisi Receiving the Stigmata*. Detail from *Four Saints Receiving the Stigmata: Francis of Assisi, Helen of Hungary, William of Strasbourg and Catherine of Siena*, from Tommaso Caffarini, *Libellus* [...], Manuscript Bologna, Biblioteca Universitaria, 1574, parchment, sec. XV¹, fol. 29r. With kind permission of the Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna.
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passion and Francis's deep yearning towards it by his keeping of fasts, solitude, prayer and contemplation; but blessed Catherine, beyond her fasts unheard of in our time and her most fervent desire for the salvation of souls which she pursued by God's order through various cities and towns, as Francis used to do, so too she used to be affected by the Lord's Sacrament in such a wondrous manner that it cannot be described, and not just as a memorial for the Lord's passion did she receive communion but for even more, so that her spirit was united to the divine spirit and her body to the body of Christ at the same time; thus she was drawn up into Christ and transformed so that she would become completely intoxicated in her suffering for him.³⁵

Here Caffarini echoes the well-established view proposed by Jacopo da Varazze: Francis's stigmatization was owing to his burning love toward the representation of Christ's passion.³⁶ Caffarini indicates that it also resulted from his ascetic practices such as fasting. Catherine, like Francis, was solicitous for souls and fasted (although Caffarini's wording implies that her fasting was better). But Caffarini distinguished between Francis and Catherine; beyond her ascetic practices, he saw Catherine's stigmatization as largely resulting from her devotion to and reception of the Eucharist; the Eucharist was the trigger of her transformation. This constitutes a mode of deification recognizable in the writings of late medieval theologians like the Dominican Meister Eckhart (d. 1327/8) who indicated that the human body as well as one's senses, will, and thoughts could be fortified by the reception of the Divine body.³⁷ For Caffarini, Catherine was united to Christ in body

³⁵ Caffarini, *Libellus* 179: 'Quoniam quantum ad primum, causa et origo stigmatum in beato Francisco fuisse videtur representatio dominice passionis et inardescencia circa illam, intendendo ieunio, solitudini, orationi et contemplationi; sed beata Catherina ultra inauditum a seculo ieunium ac ferventissimum desiderium salutis animarum, quod ex precepto Dei per civitates et castella, uti Sanctus Franciscus, prosequebatur, ita ad sacramentum dominicum miro modo et ultra quam dici possit afficiebatur, et hoc non solum tamquam ad memoriale dominice passionis, sed etiam pro quanto, ipsum sumendo, eius spiritus divino spiritui et eius corpus Christi corpori simul, uniebatur, et ita in Christum taliter rapiebatur et transformabatur ut tota ebria ad patiendum pro ipso efficeretur'. Caffarini adds that while Francis was bidden by God not to reveal to anyone the mysteries of the event, Catherine was able to confide in her confessor completely and to narrate all the details to him. Again, this implies a certain advantage on Catherine's part in that her stigmatic experience was better documented and thus more intelligible than Francis's. See Caffarini, *Libellus* 179.

³⁶ Later he explicitly cites Jacopo's *vehemens imaginatio* argument. See Caffarini, *Libellus* 197.

³⁷ Conus, "Divinisation: Môyen Âge, théologiens du 13^e siècle", in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*, vol. V, 1438. For the role of the Eucharist in female piety see Bynum C.W., *Holy*

and soul through the Eucharist and then transformed, unlike Francis who was transformed through his imagining of Christ's passion.

Caffarini's presentation of Catherine's superiority to Francis as a stigmatic saint is underlined in the depictions of them in the Bologna manuscript. Catherine's wounds are received directly from Christ and not a man/seraph, within a liturgical setting after receiving communion. Witnesses are in attendance who clearly note that something extraordinary has occurred. To demonstrate the veracity of her stigmata, her invisible stigmata are depicted as visible [Fig. 3]. Francis is outdoors when he receives the stigmata from a man-seraph. The only potential witness is Brother Leo, but he has his nose buried in a book and is not looking directly at the saint [Fig. 4]. Cumulatively, these iconographic details express Catherine's stigmatic supremacy as her wounds are bestowed by Christ without the intermediary of seraph, received in a sacred space and witnessed by a number of onlookers. We will see that the Franciscans strongly objected to these theological and related iconographical innovations.

The best known discussions dealing with depictions of Catherine and Francis as stigmatics come from the Franciscan Pope, Sixtus IV (1471–1484). He issued a series of bulls which forbade the creation of images and the preaching of sermons on Catherine of Siena with the stigmata.³⁸ However, by the time Sixtus IV first attempted this ban in 1472, Catherine had been canonized eleven years earlier by the Sienese Pope Pius II. Her reputation as a stigmatic saint had become established. As indicated by Caffarini's testimony in the *Processo Castellano*, visual representations of Catherine had been widely circulating well before her canonization. Furthermore, images of her with the stigmata were visible in prominent places. For example, near the time of her canonization, Catherine of Siena's stigmata were elaborately portrayed as spider-like wounds by Il Vecchietta (d. 1480) in Siena's Palazzo Pubblico.³⁹ The painting is thought to have been finished

Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women (Berkeley – London: 1987).

³⁸ Adnès, "Stigmates", in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. XIV, 1218.

³⁹ Bianchi – Giuna, *Iconografia di S. Caterina da Siena* 253 for the image; for the history of the painting see 252–253; for the image, see also Kaftal G., *Saint Catherine in Tuscan Painting* (Oxford: 1949) 31, Fig. VI. Il Vecchietta is also known as Lorenzo di Pietro.

perhaps as early as 1460, a year before Catherine's canonization.⁴⁰ Therefore, given that Sixtus IV's bulls circulated after Catherine's established stigmatic identity, it is not surprising that they were failures. But let us consider these bulls as they illuminate the particular struggle that Sixtus IV experienced in trying to assert papal authority in banning preaching and images presenting Catherine's stigmata.

In his bull "Spectat ad Romani Pontificis providentiam" (6 September 1472), Sixtus relates how some clerics in regions north of the Alps and elsewhere were painting images or preaching about certain female saints with the stigmata, especially Catherine. These images and sermons were produced without the consent and approval of the Apostolic See; but what was most objectionable was that such depictions put these saints on par with Francis.⁴¹ His papal message indicated that with the exception of Francis of Assisi, images of any saint with stigmata would not be tolerated. Sixtus IV, however, did state that in special circumstances if authorization were sought from the papal see, permission to depict saints with the stigmata may be granted.⁴² Hence, an ambivalence within the papal message itself mitigated the complete curtailment of the production of images of Catherine of Siena with the stigmata. Nonetheless, Sixtus IV's issuing of bulls calling for a general ban on the depiction of stigmatic saints other than Francis underlines his overall wish that such images never be produced.

Sixtus IV premised his reasoning for the banning of depictions of Catherine as a stigmatic on the claim that his predecessor Pius II did

⁴⁰ On 23 April 1460, a payment was made to the artist to paint this image: 'Magnifici domini [...] deliberaverunt, quod camerarius biccherne solvat magistro Laurentio, alias il Vecchietta, pictori, libras viginti pro sua mercede figure Catarine beate suis expensis', see *Il Processo Castellano* 488.

⁴¹ Sixtus IV, "Spectat ad Romani pontificis", in *Bullarium Franciscanum continens constitutionis, epistolas, diplomata Romani Pontificis Sixti IV ad tres ordines S.P.N. Francisci spectantia*, Tome 3 (1471–1484), ed. I.M. Pou y Martí (Quarrachi: 1949) 138. A northern European example of Catherine of Siena with the stigmata can be found in the Flemish book of hours, MS Oxford, Buchanan e. 18, fol. 140v. This manuscript was created sometime after 1461. For further information see Dijk S.J.P. van, *Handlist of the Latin Liturgical Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Oxford*, 7 vols. in 8 (1957–1960, unpublished typescript), vol. IV-B 284. Pächt O. and Alexander J.J.G., *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford*, vol. I (Oxford: 1966; repr. with corrections, Oxford: 1969) no. 327, pl. XXVI.

⁴² Sixtus IV, "Spectat ad Romani pontificis" 138. See also "Licet dum militans" [6 July 1475], in *Bullarium Franciscanum* (354–356) 355. This bull deals with the same topic as "Spectat ad Romani pontificis" but is more detailed.

not identify her as one in the bull for her canonization.⁴³ He insisted that Catherine's stigmata were never discussed in any documents related to her case for sanctity.⁴⁴ But Sixtus IV's memory was selective. For example, the canonization process of 1461 was mainly based on the *Processo Castellano*, Caffarini's early fifteenth-century attempt to have Catherine canonized. Although the canonization bull makes no mention of the stigmatization, the *Processo Castellano* is full of discussion of Catherine's stigmata, as was Raymond of Capua's *Legenda*, which was presented as part of the hagiographical evidence in 1461.⁴⁵

The veneration of Catherine as a stigmatic saint was challenged not only by Sixtus's papal bulls but also by preachers such as the Franciscan, Roberto Caracciolo (d. 1495), an Observant friar and supporter of Sixtus IV. Caracciolo published several sermon collections, which circulated throughout Europe in more than 100 editions.⁴⁶ In his sermon on Catherine of Siena, Caracciolo had nothing but praise for the saint when it came to discussing her gifts of virginity, fasting and prophecy.⁴⁷ However, in his account of her stigmata, Caracciolo's praise was not so high. He concedes that she must have had some sort of vision:

When Catherine was in the city of Pisa and on a certain morning in the church of Santa Cristina she had communicated and next to the altar she remained enrapt in spirit, after a long time she saw Christ affixed to a cross, with a great light above her descending, emitting rays of blood from his five most sacred wounds. And when many men and women saw her thus they apprehended that the virgin rose up and stood on her knees with a red face and her arms elevated. She was praying that the wounds would not appear on her body exteriorly; then the rays of blood changed into sunbeams coming forth from the wounds of the Crucified

⁴³ See Pius II's canonization bull for Catherine of Siena, *Il Processo Castellano*, 521–30.

⁴⁴ Sixtus IV, "Licet dum militans" 355.

⁴⁵ For discussion of Catherine of Siena's canonization see, Ferzoco G., 'The *Processo Castellano* and the Canonization of Catherine of Siena', in *A Companion to Catherine of Siena*.

⁴⁶ Caracciolo's capacity for persuasive preaching and leadership was recognized by Paul II (1464–71) who appointed him apostolic preacher, and Sixtus IV who made Caracciolo bishop of Aquino in 1475. See Zawart A., "The History of Franciscan Preaching and of Franciscan Preachers (1209–1927): A Bio-bibliographical Study", *Franciscan Educational Conference* 9 (1927) (243–587) 295–298.

⁴⁷ See Caracciolius de Licio Robertus, "Sermo de sancta Katherina de Senis", in *Sermones de laudibus sanctorum* (Reutlingen, 1495) (fols. 220v–225v) esp. fol. 224r.

reaching her hands, feet and her heart. A great interior and sensory pain was left in the aforementioned parts of her body.⁴⁸

Caracciolo interpreted this event as a vision that resulted in real pain, but he did not believe that this constituted stigmata on par with that of Francis of Assisi:

If we wish the name of the stigmata to be understood as this pain, in that name by no means are the miraculous conditions of blessed Francis's stigmata understood or included [...]. She was not marked by the sort of stigmata as was Francis.⁴⁹

Caracciolo reports that he was at Catherine's canonization and at no time was mention made about her alleged stigmata. He said that on the day of her canonization he preached a sermon to the people in the Dominican church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, which contains the tomb of Catherine.⁵⁰ Caracciolo explained that in preparation for the sermon, he read widely but was not able to find a single reference to her alleged stigmata.⁵¹

In his sermon, Caracciolo goes on to stress that iconographical depictions of Catherine's vision discussed above, should be executed with the utmost care.

As a result of this well-known vision, some have had St Catherine depicted receiving the stigmata from Christ [...] so that the invisible things are made known through the visible, and through the visible picture her pain, although invisible, is designated as perceptible. Perhaps

⁴⁸ Caracciolum de Licio, "Sermo de sancta Katherina de Senis", fol. 224r: 'Cum Katherina esset in civitate Pisana et quodam mane in ecclesia sancte Christine communicasset ac iuxta altare rapta maneret in spiritu, postquam diu sic steterat, vidit Christum cruci affixum magno super se cum lumine descendente radiosque sanguineos ex suis quinque sacratissimis cicatricibus eminentem. Cumque tunc videntibus pluribus utriusque sexus ipsam expectantibus virgo se erigeret et super genua sua stans facie rutilante brachia elevasset ac manus oraretque, ne cicatrices in copore suo apparerent exterius tunc ex radiis sanguinibus in solaribus inmutatis a cicatricibus crucifixi procedentibus et ad manus pedes et ad cor illius pervenientibus valde intrinsecus dolor sensibilis in dictis partibus corporis est relictus'.

⁴⁹ Caracciolum de Licio, "Sermo de sancta Katherina de Senis" fol. 224v: 'Et si nomine stigmatum dolorem illum intelligi volumus non tamen in illo continentur et includuntur conditiones miraculouse stigmatum beati Francisci [...] [S]tigmatum specie non fuit vt Franciscus insignita'. Caracciolo seems to imply that Catherine may have had 'stigmata' but not the sort Francis had.

⁵⁰ Pope Pius II invited the Franciscan to preach on the new saint in the Dominican church, which is an attestation of how well respected Caracciolo was as a preacher.

⁵¹ Caracciolum de Licio, "Sermo de sancta Katherina de Senis" fol. 224v. This point is reminiscent of Sixtus IV's bulls mentioned above.

this invites an error whereby it could be believed that she had received the visible stigmata and that they were verily borne. But if these pictures are made so that in this way she is compared to the Blessed Francis, who alone is still the only person to have the stigmata divinely impressed upon him in a unique manner, this is truly reprehensible.⁵²

The visual language of the stigmata was as fraught as the written language. On no condition was Catherine's stigmata to be depicted visibly because this would indicate that they were of the same genus of Francis, which according to the Franciscans was a transgression of their saint's unique badge of holiness.

An early sixteenth-century sermon on Catherine of Siena by the French Dominican, Guillaume Pépin (d. 1532), reflects the culmination of the arguments that eventually succeeded in getting Catherine officially recognized as a stigmatic saint in 1630 when Pope Urban VIII (1623–44) introduced the “Office of the Stigmata of Saint Catherine” into the Roman breviary.⁵³ Pépin, like his Dominican predecessors, did not see the stigmata as an exclusive miracle owned by the Franciscans:

They want to attribute to Francis alone that he had bore the stigmata of the Lord Jesus on his body, just as if (if I am permitted to say) they could bind God's power so that God is not able to communicate to the female sex what he had communicated to the male sex in the seraphic patriarch Francis.⁵⁴

Pépin put his finger on a theological problem of the Franciscan interpretation of the stigmata: it limited God's omnipotence in granting the special miracle of the stigmata to one person. Furthermore, Pépin

⁵² Caracciolum de Licio, “Sermo de sancta Katherina de Senis” fol. 224r–v: ‘Ex visione pertacta in plerisque locis nonulli sanctam Katherinam suscipientem stigmata a Christo depingi fecerunt [...] ut per visibilia invisibilia cognoscantur; et per picturam illam visibilem dolor eius invisibilis licet sensibilis designetur, forte non obstante errore inde sequente quo credi posset stigmata eam visibilia suscepisse tolerari vtique possent. Sed si hec facta sunt, ut sic equipartur beato Francisco cui soli vsque in praesens singulari modo stigmata divinitus sunt impressa vtique reprehensibile est’.

⁵³ See Adnès, “*Stigmates*” 1218.

⁵⁴ Pépin Guilelmus, “Sermo de Beata Catharina da Senensi”, in *Conciones de sanctis sive de imitatione sanctorum, pro illorum diebus, qui toto anno in ecclesia celebrantur. Hortus concionatorum, siue Praedicator generalis mysticus et moralis [...] Nunc correctius prodit, etc.*, Concionum pars quarta (Antwerp, 1656) vol. II (207–219) 217–218: ‘Soli itaque illi attribuere volunt stigmata Domini Iesu in corpore suo portasse, quasi (salva pace) velint ligare Dei potentiam, ut non possit communicare sexui femineo, quo communicauit sexui virili in Patriarcha, et Seraphico Francisco’.

accepted that Francis's stigmata and Catherine's differed in regard to visibility, but this did not mean that Catherine's invisible stigmata were false. However, it did demand a visual language that presented the invisible as visible:

The Dominicans have reasonably painted the aforementioned virgin with scars. Take the examples of angels, souls, demons and the holy Trinity, all these things, although they are of spiritual substance, are nevertheless painted with a bodily form.⁵⁵

But Pépin needed not to worry about the exclusivity of the Franciscan claim to the stigmata. Catherine's stigmatic reputation had already become established in the wider world as seen in the Middle English translation of her *Dialogue*, entitled *Orcharde of Syon* and published by Wynkyn de Worde in 1519. The printed edition was largely based on an early fifteenth-century Middle English translation of Catherine's *Dialogues*.⁵⁶ Included in the De Worde edition is a prologue which addressed the wonder of her five wounds:

Catherine of Siena: a marvellous mirror of holiness whom our saviour Jesus Christ chose as his spouse and induced her with many graces in a singular manner. And for her most fervent love, profound meekness, marvellous patience and wonderful compassion that she had, he impressed on her body the prints of his wounds and he preserved her a long time in this life without bodily sustenance.⁵⁷

The English audience thus learned that it was through Catherine's ardent love and asceticism that Christ was impelled to *impress the prints* of his wounds onto her. The 1519 edition also contains eight woodcuts of Catherine in prayer, some with the holy wounds clearly depicted on her hands [Fig. 5]. Hence, in the De Worde edition both

⁵⁵ Pépin, "Sermo de Beata Catharina da Senensi" 218: 'Fratres praedicatores depingi rationabiliter faciunt praedictam virginem cum cicatricibus. Da exemplum de Angelis, animabus, daemonibus et sancta Trinitate, quae omnia, quamvis sint substantiae spirituales, nihilominus depinguntur cum formis corporis'.

⁵⁶ The translation was based on Cristofano di Gano Guidini's early fifteenth-century Latin translation of the work. See *The Orcherde of Syon: edited from the Early Manuscripts*, EETS Original Series 258, ed. P. Hodgson and G.M. Liegey (Oxford: 1966).

⁵⁷ *Orcharde of Syon* (London, Wynkyn de Worde: 1519) fol. 2r: 'Katheryne of Sene / a mervaylous myrrour of holynesse whome oure savoure Ihesu chose unto his spouse / and induced her with many graces / after a synguler maner. And for her moste fervent love / profounde mekenesse / mervaylous pacyence / and wonderfull compassyon that she had / he impressed in her body the pryties of his woundes / and preserued her longe tyme in this lyfe / without bodily sustenaunce'.

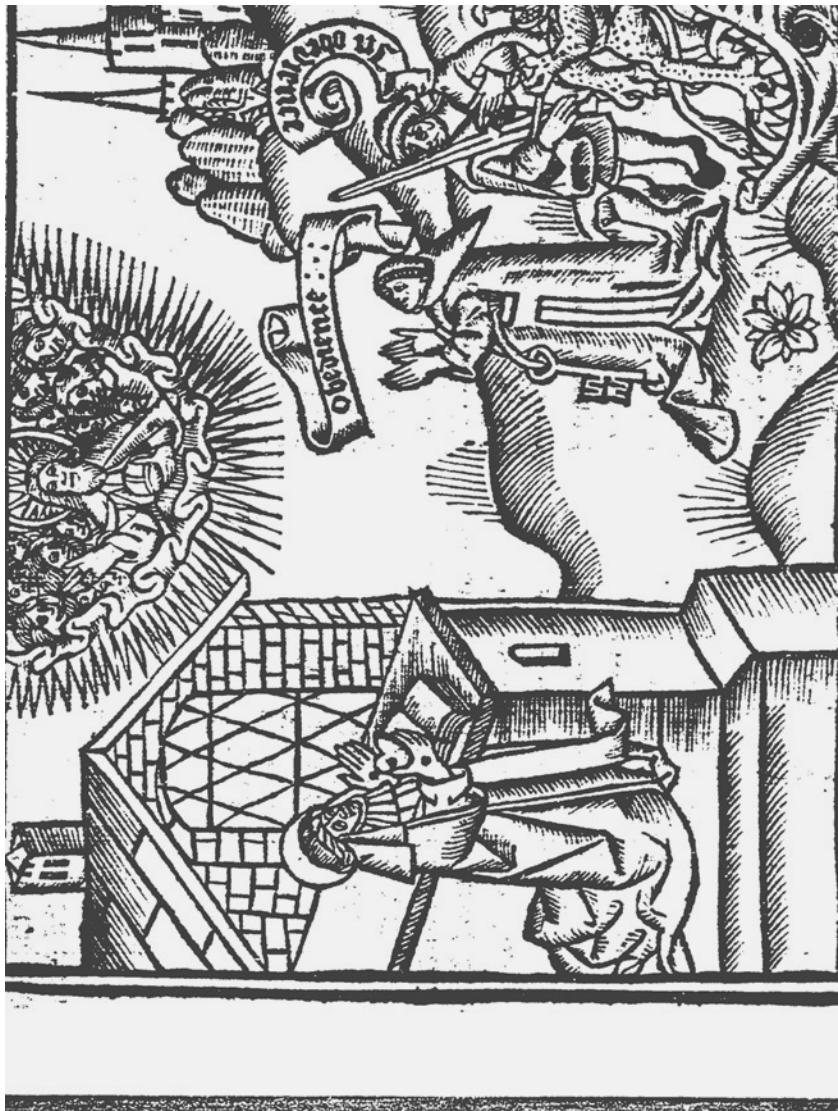


Fig. 5. *Woodcut of Catherine of Siena*. In Catherine of Siena, *Orchard of Syon* (London, Wynkyn de Worde: 1519). London, British Library, shelf mark C.11.b.6. © British Library Board.. Image published with permission of ProQuest.

in word and image the nuance of Catherine's invisible stigmata was lost. As Caracciolo had feared, Catherine's invisible marks of pain were interpreted like the impressed stigmata of Francis. Furthermore, the Middle English text indicates that Catherine, like Francis, received the stigmata out of fervent love while no connection is made between her reception of the wounds and her reception of the Eucharist, a point continuously underlined by the Dominicans. The *De Worde* edition, thus, presents a hybrid account of Catherine's wounds which appropriates some Franciscan and Dominican elements to create another interpretative framework to portray her stigmatic reception.

The war of words and images between the Dominicans and Franciscans to secure the dominant definition of the stigmata no doubt reflected a wish to claim the perfect saint. The stigmata became a type of corporate logo that indicated a singular likeness to God, a divinization achieved through association to the right religious order. But miracles and ownership did not mix; while the Dominicans and Franciscans battled it out, the miracle had moved well beyond their control and became imprinted not only on the bodies of Francis and Catherine but on texts circulating in the wider world of late medieval Europe.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ I am grateful to the Leverhulme Research Trust and the University of Bristol Research and Conference Fund for their generous support. I would also like to thank the British School at Rome, and its Director Christopher Smith, for their kind hospitality during my research in Italy. I am grateful to Professor Walter Melion for inviting me to participate in the Third Lovis Corinth Symposium at Emory University. Thanks are also owed to George Ferzoco who gave me invaluable advice and feedback on an earlier draft of this article.

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TOWARDS A TRANSCONFESSITIONAL DIALOGUE ON
PRE-MODERN THEOLOGICAL TEXTS AND IMAGES:
SOME ADNOTATIONES ON NADAL, LIPSIUS AND RUBENS

Birgit Ulrike Münch

The difficulties involved in artistically rendering the incidents of the lives of the saints and Christ as they actually happened have concerned Western European artists and theologians throughout the ages. The attempts accurately to portray the *historia*, and also the efforts to avoid any misrepresentation of these crucial events in salvation history, are both integral parts of the artistic and theological debates surrounding religious images. Within the *Orbita probitatis ad Christi imitationem*¹ of Jan David, an appendix to his very popular emblem-book, the *Christeliicken Waerseggher* or *Veridicus Christianus*, first printed in Antwerp in 1606 – as a sort of illustrated manual for the *imitatio Christi* – the difficulties of representing these events are graphically elucidated [Fig. 1]: on a hill Christ is shown bearing his cross. Ten artists sit at their easels painting after Christ their model: the scene resembles a painting academy, within which it is every painter's task to portray the cross-bearer realistically. Only one succeeds at fulfilling this task, whereas the others paint scenes from Christ's childhood or his life of ministry before the Passion, such as the entry into Jerusalem. On some easels, even the devil is depicted. The imminent danger of distorting holy events is made obvious in this seventeenth-century example. The book had grown out of Jan David's experience as a catechist and was devised to instruct young readers in the fundamentals of Catholic doctrine, as well as to exercise them in virtue and the fight against heresy. The *proemium* explains that even the most talented painters have to work diligently to convey the true story of Christ.² David acknowledges the necessity and difficulty of following the path

¹ Cf. David Jan, *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Plantin-Moretus: 1601) 351–374.

² See David, *Veridicus* 353: 'Quem admodum praecellens aliquis pictor, omni sua industria ad vivum conatur exprimere, quod sibi ex arte imitandum praesumserit ita illa homini Christiano incumbit cura, ut Christum Salvatorem nostrum in vera sanctaque conversatione imitetur et in se ad vivum quasi delineatum exhibeat [...].'



Fig. 1. Theodoor Galle, engraved title-page to Jan David, *Orbita Probitatis ad Christi imitationem veridico Christiano subserviens* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1601). Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel.

to Christ, who must be incorporated into the believer like a painted *imago*. The title-page shows the wide gap between a literal account of the historical events of the Passion and the imagined images that the mind of the believer prefers to call forth. On page 217 of the *Veridicus Christianus*, David also emphasizes the grave dangers posed by the sense of sight, when the eyes are misused. As text and image explain, Primordial Sin first entered Eve's body and soul through her eyes: 'Tota humani corporis compago (ut & caput ipsum in se) domus cuiusdam refert similitudinem'. Thus the whole composition of the human body is reflected in the head [Fig. 2]. And just as the eyes are the windows and point of entry to the head, so everything that enters through them into the head also enters the whole body. Within the *Veridicus Christianus* itself – not to mention numerous other works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – the imminent dangers of the image, the question of its proper use and the relation between inner and outer vision are repeatedly addressed as topics of importance. Allegations of heresy often surrounded these and other issues, and censorship was neither an unusual nor irrelevant phenomenon in the era of confessional conflict.

Upon reflection, one forms the impression that modern research has focused its analysis far too much on sources that are treated like hermetically closed cultural archives, such as, *inter alia*, the Catholic, Jesuit or Protestant spaces and orders of knowledge. Thus, my essay begins with the following observation: within the theological sources of this period, both verbal and visual, one can discern how historical, artistic and scientific communities cohere across confessional lines. Until recently, research has tended to focus on specifically Protestant or Catholic iconographic traditions. Many monographs assume the existence of a clearly demarcated 'Reformation' or 'Counter-Reformation', or examine 'post-Tridentine' conceptions of art in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. But a trans-confessional analysis would seem to be necessary, a point I hope to make clearly by means of the examples that follow.³

³ Münch B.U., *Geteiltes Leid. Die Passion Christi in Bildern und Texten der Konfessionalisierung* (Regensburg: 2009) 14–23; eadem, „Apelles am Scheideweg? Der frühneuzeitliche Künstler zwischen Konfession und Ökonomie“, in Tacke A. – Schauerte T. (eds.), *Der Kardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg. Renaissancefürst und Mäzen* (Regensburg: 2006) vol. II, 379–385.

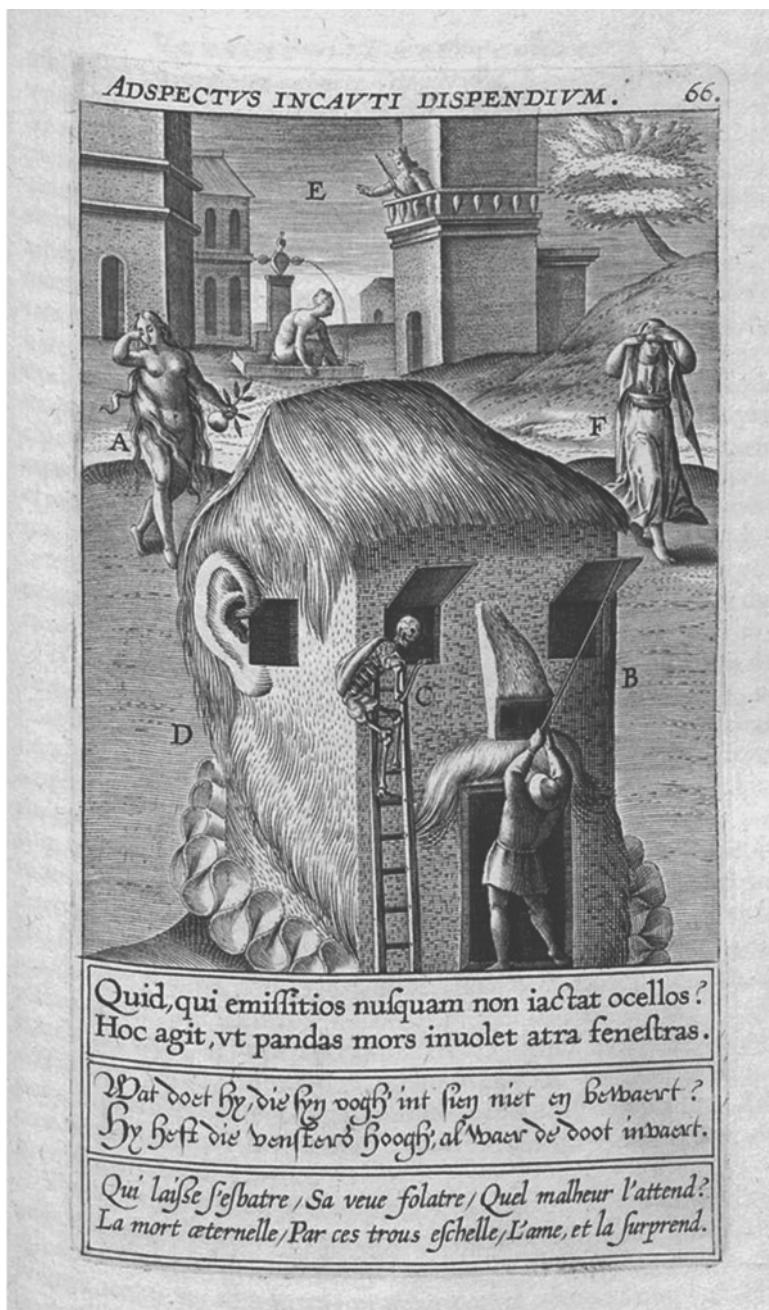


Fig. 2. Theodoor Galle, *Tota humani corporis*, engraved emblematic illustration to Jan David, *Veridicus Christianus* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1601) 217.
Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel.

Confessional 'blind spots' are by no means a phenomenon that can be historicized – on the contrary, they are ongoing. It seems that even today the scholarly world is often affected by nineteenth-century Prussian notions of cultural Protestantism and of its Catholic counterpart, the so-called Counter Reformation. The confessional provenance of visual and verbal sources has occasionally been ignored or insufficiently examined. Other well-known sources are often interpreted from the single vantage point of the confession of the patron, artist or author. Let us now consider three examples of confessional dialogue, to be discussed in ascending order of relevance. Firstly, I analyze the model for Rubens's tapestry series, the *Triumph of the Eucharist*; secondly, the template on which one of the most important Jesuit books of the sixteenth century, the *Evangelicae historiae imagines*, was based; and thirdly, Justus Lipsius' *De cruce libri tres*.

Peter Paul Rubens's third tapestry cycle, the *Triumph of the Eucharist*, was designed for the *Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales* (Convent of the Barefoot Royals), the residence of the widows of the Spanish court in Madrid, founded by Joanna of Austria in 1559. The *infanta* Isabella Clara Eugenia (1566–1633), co-sovereign of the Spanish Netherlands, and the artist probably first negotiated the terms of the commission in Antwerp in 1625. The *Triumph of the Eucharist* can be regarded as one of the most impressive manifestos of the Catholic Reformation, and it is treated as such in Knipping's standard work, *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands*.⁴ The program of this cycle culminates in the large tapestry, *The Triumph of the Church* (4.8 × 7.5 m.) [Fig. 3]: it depicts a triumphal chariot, drawn by four white horses and driven by a *putto*, on which sits the enthroned personification of Ecclesia, holding in her hand an ostensory with the consecrated host, while overhead an angel crowns her with a tiara. The angel on horseback shows another papal symbol, a *baldachino* with the crossed keys of St Peter, and glances at the viewer.

On its path to glory, the triumphal chariot overruns three figures, which can be identified as personifications of Fury, Discord and Hate, followed by Blindness and Ignorance (characterized by donkey-ears). While scholars have analyzed the religious and political dimensions of the cycle and reconstructed the original setting of the tapestries in

⁴ Knipping J.B., *Iconography of the Counter Reformation in the Netherlands. Heaven on Earth*, 2 vols. (Nieuwkoop – Leiden: 1974).



Fig. 3. Peter Paul Rubens, *Triumph of the Church* (1630), painted modello for the tapestry, Museo del Prado, Madrid.

the Spanish convent, no models for it have hitherto been found. As Rubens worked closely with the Antwerp Jesuits, it is often mentioned that they probably functioned as theological advisers. The existence of a model of Rubens's cycle has even been questioned.⁵ A connection to Otto van Veen's *Fundamenta et principia fidei*, a Christian *trionfo* consisting of six paintings,⁶ to Titian's print-series in praise of the Christian faith⁷ and to the *Psalmodia Eucharistica* of Melchior Prieto (1622) has been proposed.⁸ Rubens knew all these antecedents, of course, but the absence of iconographic and functional parallels to his triumph against the heretics is obvious. Nora de Poorter has emphasized that triumphal processions were an integral part of early-modern cities,⁹ and Petrarchan *trionfi*-motifs offer legitimate points of comparison, but these parallels remain for the most part vague and unspecific.¹⁰

Astonishingly enough, a very close model has never been mentioned or interpreted. This source, itself rather well known, has presumably been overlooked because it was created within the 'wrong' confession: Urs Graf probably designed the woodcut which forms part of a broadsheet entitled *Triumphus veritatis. Sick der warheyt* [Fig. 4].¹¹ The author and date of publication are mentioned in the text: Hans

⁵ Poorter N. de, *The Eucharist Series*, 2 vols. (London – Philadelphia: 1978) vol. I 204: "The question has often been raised as to the models which inspired Rubens's conception and execution of the religious triumphs in the Eucharist series. However, since the idea of the triumph was common property in the seventeenth century and since it was so often met with in real life as well as in literature and art, there seems no point in inquiring to what example Rubens was indebted".

⁶ Bamberg, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Inventory number 807–812; De Poorter, *Eucharist Series* 200ff.; Haberditzl F.-M., "Die Lehrer des Rubens", *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 27 (1908) 199 and 226ff.

⁷ Dreyer P. (ed.), *Tizian und sein Kreis. 50 Venezianische Holzschnitte aus dem Berliner Kupferstichkabinett* (Berlin: 1972) 32–41.

⁸ De Poorter, *Eucharist Series* 169–171; cf. Vetter E.M., *Die Kupferstiche zur Psalmodia Eucaristica des Melchior Prieto von 1622* (Münster: 1972).

⁹ De Poorter, *Eucharist Series* 202.

¹⁰ Weisbach W., *Trionfi* (Berlin: 1919); in addition, Trapp J.B., *Studies of Petrarch and his influence* (London: 2003) 201–243; Habig I., *Eucharistische Allegorie im Spätbarock nördlich der Alpen. Phänomenologie der dogmatischen, apologetischen katechetischen und devotionalen Bildelemente einer kirchlichen Allegorese* (doct. Thesis, University of Münster: 1971) 69–111.

¹¹ Stuhlfauth G., "Die beiden Holzschnitte der Flugschrift *Triumphus veritatis* von Hans Heinrich Freiermut (1524). Ein Beitrag zum Werk des Urs Graf", *Zeitschrift für Bücherfreunde N.F.* 13 (1921) 49–56.

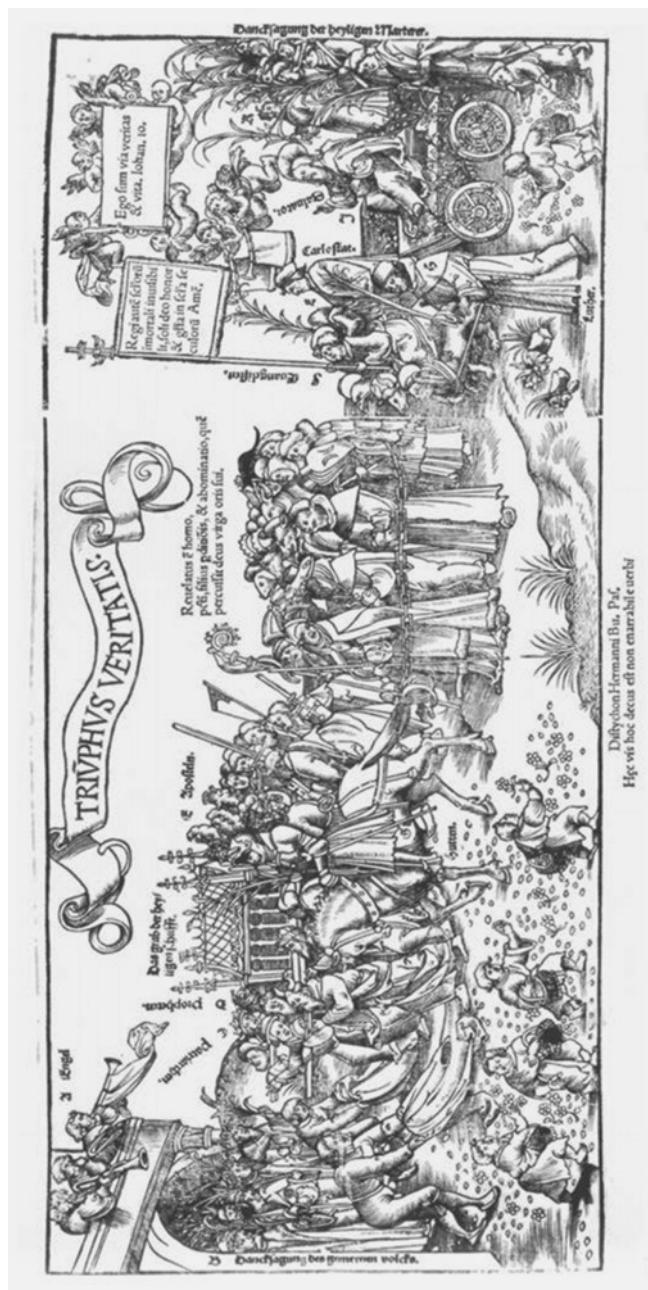


Fig. 4. Urs Graf (?), *Triumphus veritatis*, woodcut illustration to Hans Heinrich Freiermut, *Triumphus veritatis. Sick der warkeyt* (Nuremberg, n.p.: 1524). Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg.

Heinrich Freiermut published the 2034 verses in 1524 in Zurich.¹² As Freiermut means “free spirit” in early modern high German, it seems clear that this name should be regarded as a pseudonym.

The verses explain the meaning of the fold-out woodcut, which is provided with letters so that the reader can assign certain parts of the speech to different actors within the image. The text has received virtually no attention, and the woodcut has yet fully to be interpreted,¹³ although it can be found in several publications on early modern broadsheets, single leaf woodcuts or Lutheran art.¹⁴ A procession marches from the right to the left, in the center Ulrich von Hutten leads a group of enchain'd prisoners. The pope and a bishop can be identified: their tiara and miter, patriarchal cross and crozier seem ready to burst asunder. They are followed by enemies of Martin Luther, who are given the heads of animals with pejorative connotations, e.g., Johannes Eck appears as a boar, Jakob Lemb as a dog and Augustin Alveld, whom Luther himself denominated as the ‘ass of Leipzig’,¹⁵ appears as such. Behind the prisoners, Christ sits on a triumphal chariot guided by the four Evangelists and followed by believers who carry palm fronds. Patriarchs, apostles and prophets hold the ‘grab der heyligen schrifft’ ('Holy Scripture's grave'). A group of believers welcomes the procession under an archway, laying their clothes on the ground, in imitation of the iconography of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

On top of this scenography, a broad banner unfurls and entitles the triumphal procession: *Triumphus Veritatis*. This refers to the truth of Holy Scripture, *sola scriptura* in Luther's words, and primarily to the truth of the gospel, which will destroy the enemies of the true, i.e.,

¹² *Triumphus veritatis*: Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 8° RL 1713 Postinc., V. 2000–2003 and 2034.

¹³ Schade O. (ed.), *Satiren und Pasquelle aus der Reformationszeit*, 2 vols. (Hanover: 1856–1858) vol. II 196–251.

¹⁴ For example Scribner R.W., *For the sake of simple folk. Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge: 1981) 63–65. Around 1900 the woodcut was reprinted in several publications, e.g., Bezold F. von, *Geschichte der deutschen Reformation. Mit Portraits* (Berlin: 1890) 354ff.; Drews P., *Der evangelische Geistliche in der deutschen Vergangenheit* (Jena: 1905) 23, tab. 18; Schreckenbach P. – Neubert F., *Martin Luther. Ein Bild seines Lebens und Wirkens* (Leipzig: 1916) 112; cf. also, *Reformation in Nürnberg. Umbruch und Bewahrung* (Nuremberg: 1979) no. 155; Bott G. (ed.), *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland* (Nuremberg: 1983) 221ff.

¹⁵ In the 1523 poem *Wittenbergisch Nachtigall* by Hans Sachs, four of these classifications have already been established; cf. *Hans Sachs*, ed. A. von Keller – E. Goetze, 26 vols. (Stuttgart: 1880–1887) VI 368–386, XXIV no. 6, XXV no. 82.

Protestant religion.¹⁶ In addition to numerous references to Graf's woodcut within Rubens's tapestry cycle – the believers with palm fronds, the angels playing trumpets, characters from history, who are displayed like prisoners, the Old Testament patriarchs, who play the part of 'authoritative ancestors' or the *titulus*, waving aloft like a banner and advancing toward the cartouche *Ecclesiae Triumphus* – it can also be argued that the intention of the two images is the same: to use the iconography of the *trionfi* for confessional dispute and religious combat. This comparison makes clear that it is not correct to claim, as does De Poorter, that Rubens's *trionfo* is 'an expression of the Counter-Reformation itself, with its confidence in the victory of the beleaguered Church over paganism, heresy and other enemies'.¹⁷ Rather, the motif of triumph was used – as Freiermut's woodcut demonstrates – in a similar way over 100 years before, but by supporters of the Lutheran faith.

In spite of the evidently propagandistic function of Rubens's monumental series for Archduchess Isabella Clara Eugenia, its relation to imagery deriving from the strong verbal and visual propaganda campaign of the Reformers against Catholicism has been all but ignored. This is remarkable, given that scholars agree that Rubens emulated a very wide range of images, most notably drawings and prints of the sixteenth century. Luther, the leader of the Christian *trionfo* in Freiermut's woodcut is conquered in Rubens's *Triumph of Truth over Heresy*, along with Calvin, Muhammad and other heretics [Fig. 5]. This detail could be interpreted as a distinct response to Freiermut: overwhelmed by the true faith of the Catholic Church, Luther attempts in vain to take hold of one of his 95 propositions, while Calvin despairingly tries to stand, holding in his hands a book that is probably his French translation of the Bible.

These examples of Protestant and Catholic 'propaganda material' lead us to our second case study. In 1595, the *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* of Jerome Nadal, S.J., comprising more than 600 pages, were assembled for printing in Antwerp.¹⁸ The work is correctly

¹⁶ The woodcut refers to the woodcut of Hutten Ulrich von, *Triumphus Capnionis des Triumphus Docetoris Reuchlini* (Hagenau, Anselm: 1518).

¹⁷ De Poorter, *Eucharist Series* 204.

¹⁸ The full title is: *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia quae in sacrosanto Missae sacrificio toto anno leguntur: Cum Evangeliorum concordantia historiae integratam*



Fig. 5. Adriaen Lommelein after Peter Paul Rubens, *Triumph over Heresy* (1650). Engraving, 64.4 × 89.7 cm. The British Museum 1891.0414.688.

perceived as one of the most important illustrated print projects of the sixteenth century.¹⁹ This is not only due to its sheer volume and organization of text and illustrations. The copper-engravings produced by Antoon, Hieronymus and Jan Wierix, that describe the life of Christ, are consistently high in quality; however, some of them show rarely illustrated scenes and in many cases make use of unusual compositions.²⁰

The 153 engravings usually display a panoramic format. Thus, they illustrate various scenes from the life of Jesus simultaneously, and these single scenes are provided with *didascalia* or *capita*, which in turn are explained below the picture, as can be seen in the example showing the Annunciation, in which the Crucifixion is marked with the letter N. Beyond this, two textual genres are attached to the pictures, both likewise provided with the appropriate letters: *adnotationes*, that is, comments and explanations, and *meditationes*, that is, meditations for prayer. As early as 1593, the high-quality engravings had already appeared as an independent publication, accompanied only by brief remarks, under the title *Evangelicae historiae imagines*. The relation of text and image and the functions to be inferred from this relation are as complex as the question of the project's origin, the completion of which dragged on for decades, as the surviving correspondence indicates. Scholarly research has analyzed the *Adnotationes et Meditationes* in many ways.²¹ Special emphasis must be placed on the insightful

sufficienti. Accessit et index historiam ipsam Evangelicam in ordinem temporis vitae Christi distribuens (Antwerp, Martinus Nutius: 1595). A further edition was published under the title: *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia quae in sacrosancto Missae sacrificio toto anno leguntur: Cum eorundem Evangeliorum concordantia [...] Editio ultima: In qua Sacer Textus ad emendationem Bibliorum Sixti V. et Clementis VIII. restitutus* (Antwerp, Jan Moretus: 1607).

¹⁹ Wadell M.-B., *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines. Entstehungsgeschichte und Vorlagen* (Gothenburg: 1985) 7.

²⁰ On the brothers Wierix, see most recently, Wiebel C., *Die Brüder Wierix. Grafik in Antwerpen zwischen Bruegel ende Rubens* [exh. cat., Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg] (Coburg: 1995); see also, Mauquoy-Hendrickx M., *Les Estampes des Wierix. Conservees au Cabinet des Estampes de la Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1^{er}. Catalogue raisonné enrichi de notes prises dans diverses autres collections*, 3 vols. (Brussels: 1978).

²¹ Freedberg D., "A Source for Rubens's *modello* of the *Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin*. A Case Study in the Response to Images", *Burlington Magazine* 120 (1978) 432–442; Buser T., "Jerome Nadal and Early Jesuit Art in Rome", *Art Bulletin* 58 (1976) 424–433; Wittkower R. – Jaffé D. (eds.), *Baroque Art. The Jesuit Contribution* (New York: 1972), especially Hibbard H., "Ut picturae sermones". The First Painted Decorations of the Gesù" 29–50. In addition to the reception of the work in

and extremely fruitful studies of Walter Melion, who explored *inter alia* the meditative art and the function of the *Evangelicae historiae imagines*²² and who is also contributor to the essential three-volume translation of the Latin text into English.²³ Others have, albeit far from exhaustively, grappled with the function of the complex illustrations and their traditions within the Jesuit cultural archive.²⁴

Roman art, the *Evangelicae historiae imagines* had a profound impact on Spanish art; see Cunnar E.R., "Jerome Nadal and Francisco Pacheco. A Print and a Verbal Source for Zurbarán's *Circumcision*, 1639", *Boletín del Museo e Instituto Camón Aznar* 33 (1988) 105–112; Rodríguez de Ceballos A., "Las Imágenes de la historia evangélica del P. Jerónimo Nadal en el marco del jesuitismo y la contrarreforma", *Traza y baza* 5 (1974) 77–95; Delgado F., "El Padre Jerónimo Nadal y la pintura sevillana del siglo XVII", *Archivum historicum Societatis Iesu* 2 (1959) 354–363. Concerning the impact of the *Evangelicae historiae imagines* on the 'cuadro dentro del cuadro' (picture within the picture) in Francisco Pacheco's *St Irene*, see Moffitt J.F., "Francisco Pacheco and Jerome Nadal: New Light on the Flemish Sources of the Spanish 'Picture within Picture'", *Art Bulletin* 72 (1990) 631–638. On the missionary impact of the work's copper engravings, see d'Elia P.M., *Le origini dell'arte cristiana cinese 1583–1640* (Rome: 1939) 78ff.

²² Melion W.S., "The Art of Vision in Jerome Nadal's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia*", in Homann F.A. – Melion W.S. (eds.), *Jerome Nadal Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels*, 3 vols. (Philadelphia: 2003) vol. I 1–96; idem, "Mortis illius imagines ut vitae: The Image of the Glorified Christ in Jerome Nadal's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia*", in ibidem, vol. III 1–32; idem, "Haec per imagines huius mysterij Ecclesia sancta [clamat]: The Image of the Suffering Christ in Jerome Nadal's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia*", in ibidem, vol. II 1–73; idem, *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print* (Philadelphia: 2009); Clifton J. – Melion W. (eds.), *Scripture for the eyes: Bible Illustration in Netherlandish Prints of the Sixteenth Century* [exh. cat., Museum of Biblical Art, New York: Michael C. Carlos Museum, Emory University, Atlanta] (London: 2009); idem, "Ex libera meditatione: Visualizing the Sacrificial Christ in Jerónimo Nadal's *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels*", in Kupfer M. – Marrow J.H. (eds.), *The Passion Story: From Visual Representation to Social Drama* (Philadelphia: 2008) 246–250; idem, "Memory, Place, and Mission in Hieronymus Natalis' *Evangelicae historiae imagines*", in Reinink W. – Stumpel J. (eds.), *Memory and Oblivion: Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art* (Dordrecht: 1999) 603–608; Melion W.S., "Artifice, Memory and Reformatio in Hieronymus Natalis's *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* of 1595", *Renaissance and Reformation* 22 (1998) 5–34.

²³ Nadal Jerome, *Annotations and Meditations on the Gospels*, eds. F.A. Homann – W. S. Melion, 3 vols. [vol. I: *The Infancy Narratives*, vol. II: *The Passion Narratives*, vol. III: *The Resurrection Narratives*] (Philadelphia: 2003–2008).

²⁴ Chipp Smith J., *Sensuous Worship. Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton: 2002) 11–55; Rheinbay P., *Biblische Bilder für den inneren Weg: Das Betrachtungsbuch des Ignatius-Gefährten Hieronymus Nadal (1507–1580)* (Egelsbach: 1995) 35–106; Fabre P.-A., *Ignace de Loyola. Le lieu de l'image. Le problème de la composition de lieu dans les pratiques spirituelles et artistiques jésuites de la seconde moitié du XVI^e siècle* (Paris: 1992) 163–239 and 263–295; Moffit, "Francisco Pacheco" 631–638. Shorter notes can be found in Wimböck G., "Jerónimo Nadal S.J. *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* und *Evangelicae historiae imagines*",

My brief reflection, however, concerns the work's source and thus its actual process of development. This connects in turn to the question of where within the tradition the Jesuit compendium should be placed. Indeed, the *Adnotationes et meditationes* has often been described in the literature as an invention without precedent, belonging overtly to the Counter Reformation. At present, a total of three draft-series is known, on the basis of which the development of the final print may be traced. The latest was purchased for the Bibliothèque Royale at Brussels, which was purchased by the library in the nineteenth century. Attributed to Bernardino Passeri, these drawings originally belonged to the Jesuit college of Antwerp. Another series, now at Windsor Castle, is incomplete and consists of red chalk drawings, formerly attributed to Passeri by Leo Puysfelde (an attribution that he later revised). Giovanni Battista Fiammeri, a member of the order, who was active as an artist, may have executed these sketches.²⁵ The third series, housed at the Biblioteca Nazionale in Rome, was discovered by Maj-Britt Wadell in 1960; it is the oldest of the three, as proven by the watermark, which can be dated to ca. 1555. On the basis of stylistic comparisons, Wadell attributed them to the Roman artist Livio Agresti, who probably came into contact with the Jesuits via the bishop of Augsburg, Otto Truchsess of Waldburg. The internal chronology of the three series can be established from the example of the sheets illustrating the *Noli me tangere*. While the internal chronology of the preparatory drawings was until recently the main focus of research, the question of the series' ultimate model, especially as pertains to the oldest Roman sequence, has so far remained unanswered. Yet the question is worth posing, since the answer may indicate whether Nadal contrived his *Meditationes* from pictorial or textual sources, or whether the complex images were executed before or after the text was written. In essence, this will enable us better to discern the creative work process, whence the entire book emerged.

Attempts to find the ultimate source have been undertaken by Paul Rheinbay among others, although the results have thus far proved

in Baumstark R. (ed.), *Rom in Bayern. Kunst und Spiritualität der ersten Jesuiten*. Bayerisches Nationalmuseum (Munich: 1997) 497ff., no. 164; Freedberg D., *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: 1989) 181ff.; 185; 272ff.

²⁵ Letter of the order's general Aquaviva to the rector in Nola, cf. *Intagliatori gesuiti italiani*, ed. P. Pirri (Rome: 1952) 37, n. 66; cf. also Wadell, *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* 14ff.

inconclusive.²⁶ Let us consider a single case from among more than the 153 engravings: the representation of the house that features in the sheet showing the Prodigal Son, for which an engraving of the same subject by Dürer can clearly be identified as the model. However, this analogy applies only to the second series in Windsor and therefore gives no indication of the original source. Rheinbay promulgated the widely accepted thesis that the work could have been designed visually and textually by Ignatius of Loyola himself, rather than Nadal.²⁷ Concerning the iconographic precursor to the first and oldest draft-series, Rheinbay, in line with Wadell, referred without further commentary to a solely biblical (and mainly Old Testament) series of pictures by Hans Holbein or Bernard Solomon.²⁸ Here again we may surmise that vital source material was not considered because it seemed to originate from outside the field of 'Counter-Reformation art. The foreword to the *Imagines*, composed by Nadal's assistant Ximénez, makes it clear that the author wanted to produce a pedagogical-didactic compendium. He thus likely consulted other didactic works in the process of producing his own compilation. It is also difficult to imagine how Nadal could have worked without drawing on a large corpus of images, which would have served as visual prompts for the design of the *Imagines*, or for that matter, how he could have composed the texts to the multi-scenic images without the use of such visual aids. It would also be unrealistic to argue with regard to economics of production, that Nadal made use of a variety of existing cycles of the life and Passion of Christ, or that he worked solely from imagination, when inventing the major and minor locations within the 153 engravings. On the contrary, it seems rather obvious that he must have searched for an extensive model from which to adapt numerous pictures the formal or iconographic elements of his own work, and that he chose a model capable of providing the basic framework for his visual meditations. He would have proceeded by inserting handwritten *capita* into the source illustrations. Nadal's primary model has been found neither in the art of the Counter-Reformation nor in lives of Christ by celebrated masters such as Dürer. Although prints by lesser known or

²⁶ Wadell, *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* 35: 'Ich habe große Anstrengungen gemacht, Vorbilder oder Vorlagen für die Zeichnungen in Rom aufzuspüren. In vielen Fällen bin ich überzeugt, daß solche existiert haben müssen'.

²⁷ Rheinbay, *Biblische Bilder* 48.

²⁸ Ibidem, 107.

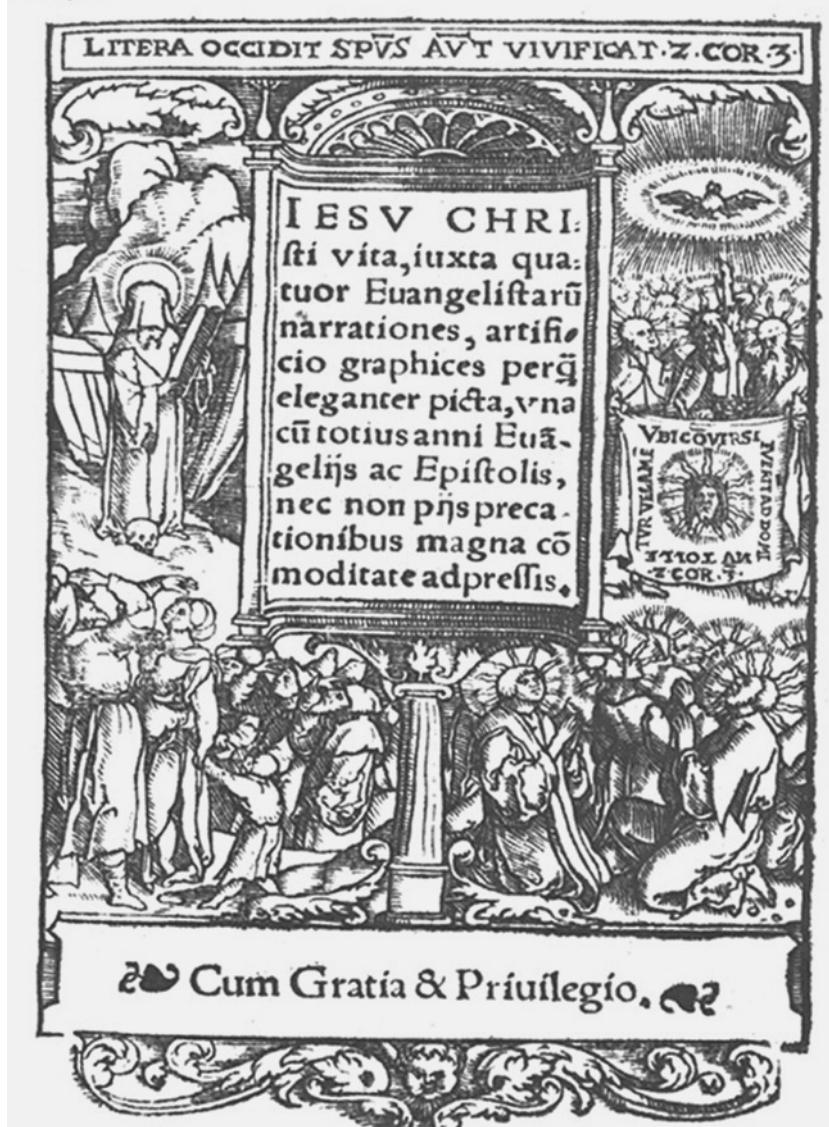
anonymous masters, illustrating the many devotional texts on the life of Christ, have not been put forward as possible models, I believe that one of these in fact provided him with the template for his textual and visual compilation.

On 24 December 1537, Latin and Dutch versions of a book on the life of Jesus were published on behalf of the bookseller Adriaen van Bokhout Kempe at the press of Mattheus Crom in Antwerp:²⁹ this was the *Iesu Christi vita or dat leven ons Heeren* by Willem van Branteghem [Fig. 6]. The book contains 186 woodcuts, a strikingly large number. The painter who created these woodcuts can be identified as Lieven de Witte on the basis of a “Eulogy to the Artist”, that follows the book’s preface; the first letters of each line of verse spell the acrostic ‘LEVINVS DE VVITTE GANDENSIS’ – that is, Lieven de Witte of Ghent. First of all, it is noteworthy that De Witte’s woodcuts, like Agresti’s drawings, were executed in horizontal format, in contrast to the Windsor series that uses an upright format. 150 of the 153 scenes in the *Evangelicae historiae imagines* derive from De Witte’s woodcuts. In some cases, Agresti shifts a background scene to the foreground, giving it more emphasis, but in all other respects, the composition of the *Imagines* originates in the *Iesu Christi vita*. Van Branteghem interpolates no medallions framing subsidiary scenes, nor does he frequently correlate types and antitypes, but his book includes a variety of rarely depicted scenes, such as the Passover meal with the Israelites holding rods (a prefiguration of the Eucharist), which served as a model for the corresponding scene in the *Imagines* [Figs. 7 and 8].

Nadal may come across Van Branteghem’s book for the first time during his visits to Flanders; indeed, he first mentions the *Adnotationes* in a document written in Leuven. Moreover, a French edition of the book was issued in 1539, so that Nadal could have used it either in a Latin or French edition. Moreover, Van Branteghem may have interested the Jesuit pedagogue Nadal not least because of his stated intention of instructing laymen, and also because he had designed his book for those who wished to meditate on the service of the Mass out-

²⁹ The following editions are listed in Nijhoff W. – Kronenberg M.E., *Nederlandse bibliographie van 1500 tot 1540*, 3 vols. ('s-Gravenhage: 1923–1942) vol. I no. 486: 's-Gravenhage, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, shelf-mark 228 G 52; Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Prentenkabinet; Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek Albert I, shelf-mark VB 663 A.L.P.; Ghent, Universiteitsbibliotheek; London, British Library. I used copies housed in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich (shelf-mark Rar 4353) and – in the form of a reprint of the Latin edition of 1538 – in the Antwerp Museum Plantin-Moretus.

xv. 4353



Iesu Christi vita, (Antwerp, Mattheus Crom: 1557). Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.

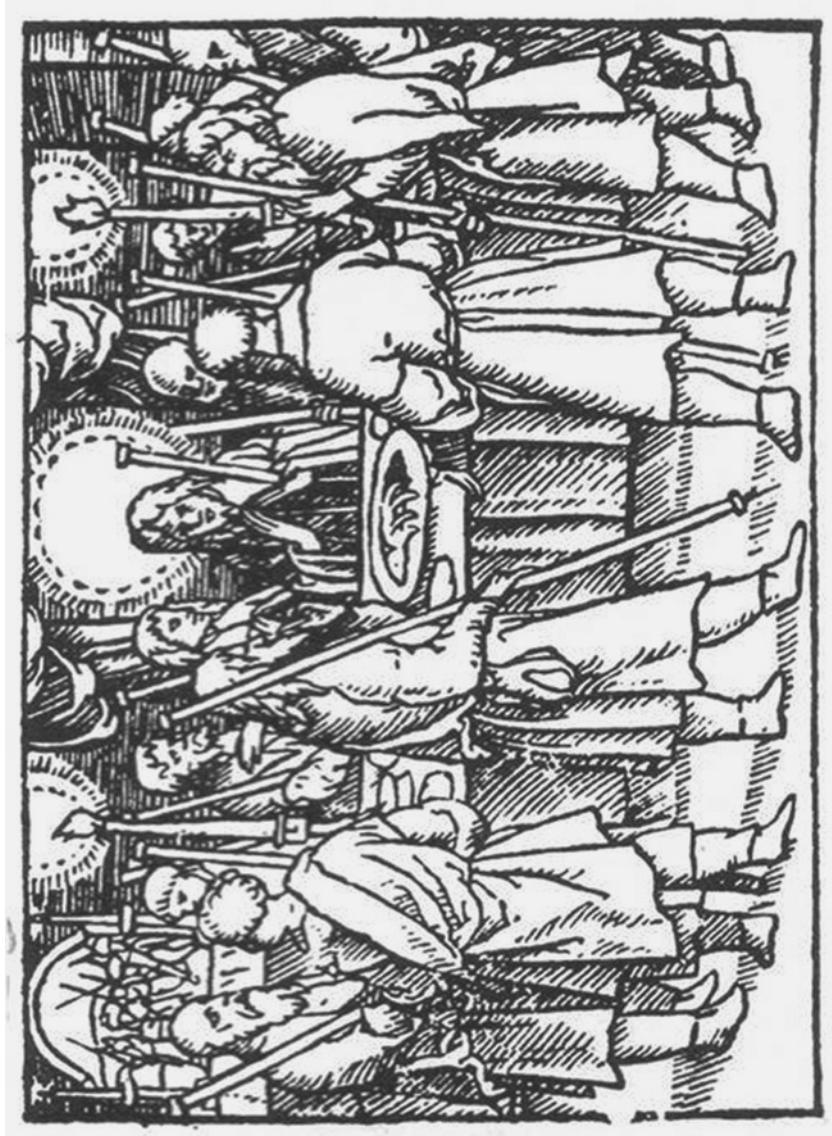


Fig. 7. Lieven de Witte, *Passover Meal*, woodcut illustration to Willem van Branteghem, *Iesu Christi vita, Title Page* (Antwerp, Mattheus Crom: 1537) fol. ccxxxii.

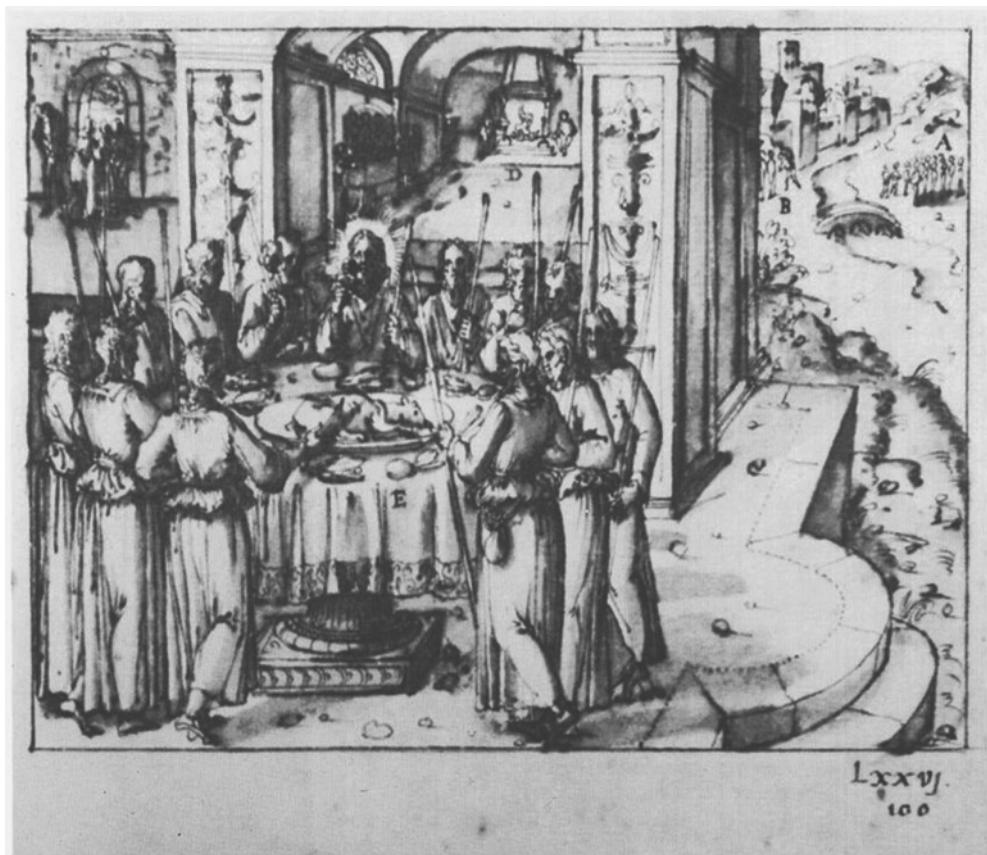


Fig. 8. Livio Agresti (?), *Passover Meal*, design for *imago 100* in Jerónimo Nadal, *Evangelicae historiae imagines* (Antwerp, Martinus Nutius: 1593). Pen and ink, Biblioteca Nazionale, Rome.

side a liturgical setting. This notion can also be corroborated from the work's twenty-one page preface, dedicated to Adriaen Heetveld, the high quaestor of the province of Zeeland. As Van Branteghem points out, his gospel harmony is intended to imprint the life of Christ on the memory in a lasting way: 'facilius, et tenacius in memoria', the 'artificio graphices' – that is, the artistically ambitious pictures – are to be used to enable better memorization of the book's contents.

Remarkable in this context is the fact that a detailed presentation of the pedagogical and didactic approach, and especially an explanation of the function of the images, are rarely found in the forewords to Dutch devotional books of that time, although they sometimes appear

in the numerous picture-Bibles printed by the Feyerabend workshop in Frankfurt. Nadal's formulations of his book's didactic function are thus likewise foreshadowed in Van Branteghem's work. The fact that neither Nadal nor any other Jesuit mentions Van Branteghem anywhere in the order's extensive written correspondence, may well result from the following circumstance. The theological faculty of the University of Leuven, to whom Nadal planned to send his *Adnotationes et meditationes* for inspection and approbation, that is, the exact circle of professors responsible for composing and publishing the index of banned and dangerous books, had repeatedly condemned Van Branteghem's book, putting it on the index in the 1540s. As Willem Bax points out in his book on Protestantism in the diocese of Liege and Maastricht, the book had frequently been confiscated, having been found in the possession of adherents to the Reformation.³⁰ Woodcuts from Van Branteghem's work, such as the *Temptation of Christ*, showing a devil equipped with a monk's habit and rosary, especially scandalized the inspectors. It seems very plausible that Nadal, who wanted to have his own work corrected and accepted by various authorities, would have refrained from recommending to the members of his own order a book that the Leuven authorities had placed on the index. And yet, Van Branteghem was the primary source of his illustrations.

The next source I want to adduce is similar, in that it comes neither from books approved by the Tridentine Church nor from independent prints and print series by leading artists. The typical Jesuit *ars memorativa* (of which Nadal's book is often cited as the first extant example) consists mainly of descriptive letters incorporated into the images; this format can be found several years earlier, not in Catholic, but rather in Protestant bible illustrations, such as the Lutheran New Testament printed in Strasburg by Johann Grüninger in the year 1527. The artist Heinrich Vogtherr the Elder created 64 illustrations for the book: each image combines several different Passion scenes and incorporates explanatory letters at the top of the page. Like the plates of the *Evangeliæ Historiae Imagines*, Vogtherr's images include the text of the biblical passages being illustrated [Fig. 9]. A number of famous Protestant altarpieces were modeled after such bible illustrations, for example the

³⁰ See Veldman I. – Schaik K. van, *Verbeeldt Boodschap. De Illustraties van Lieven de Witte bij Dat leven ons Heeren* (1537) (Haarlem: 1995) 45–49; Bax W., *Het protestantisme in het bisdom Luik en vooral te Maastricht 1557–1612* ('s-Gravenhage: 1937) vol. I 157 and 199ff.

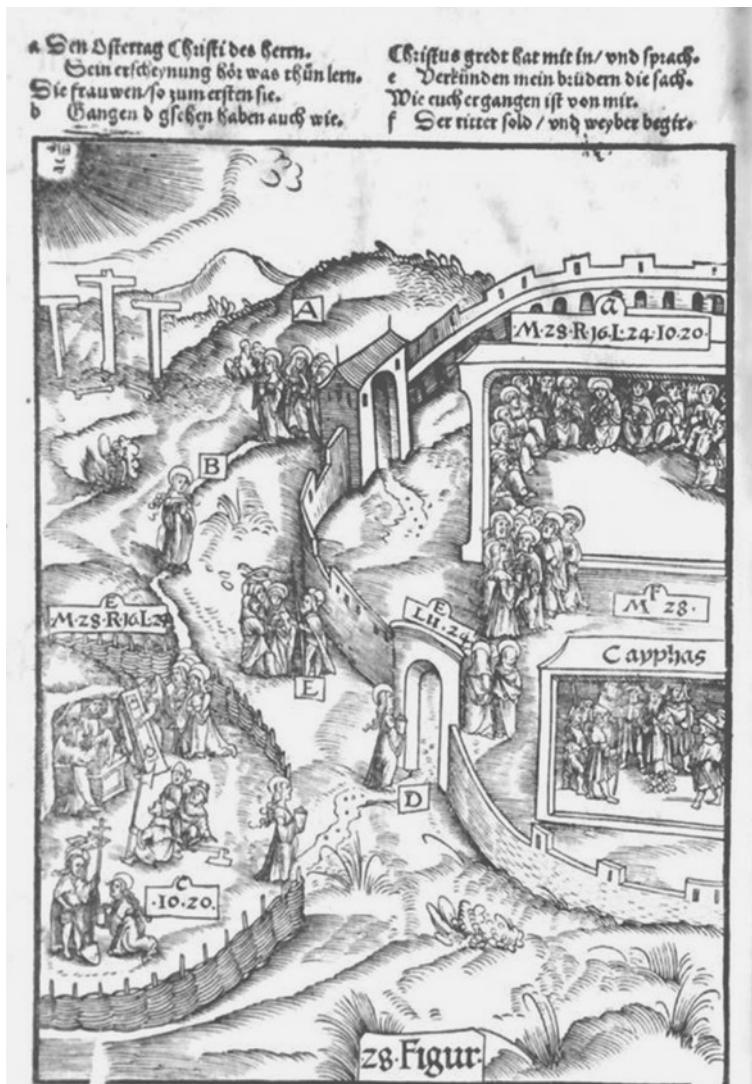


Fig. 9. Heinrich Vogtherr the Elder, woodcut illustration to Jacob Beringer, *Nüw Testament Kurtz vnd gründlich* (Straßburg, Johann Grüninger: 1527) figure 20. Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel.

so-called *Gotha Altar* of 1540, which inserts texts of Luther's Bible translation into numerous cartouches.

Finally, I want to take a brief look at yet another publication, that in my view has been interpreted too unilaterally. In the years 1593–1594, the printing house of Plantin-Moretus published the treatise *De Cruce libri tres* by the humanist and philologist Justus Lipsius.³¹ The work was intended to provide a broad historical account of the forms of the cross and of crucifixion. Lipsius's biography is characterized by several confessional changes: up to the year 1570 he was secretary to Cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle in Rome; from 1572 to 1573, he was professor at the Lutheran University of Jena; from 1576 to 1577 at the Catholic University of Leuven; and after this, he converted to Calvinism and became professor at the University of Leiden until 1590. After his final return to Catholicism in the early nineties, he remained until his death professor of Latin and history at Leuven. His biography offers a distinctive, though by no means unique, example of confessional change in the later sixteenth century.³²

In art historical research, Lipsius plays an important role primarily as a source of ideas for Rubens. For example, Rubens's use of the typical four-nails crucifixion has been repeatedly attributed to the fact that Lipsius believed his book to have proven that this form of crucifixion was historically correct and must therefore be used for the representation of the Crucifixion of Christ. A closer look at Lipsius's work, more precisely the ninth chapter of his book, reveals that the humanist presented his conclusion as far from definitive. In fact, Lipsius denies, particularly in relation to the Crucifixion of Christ, that the number of nails used can ultimately be determined. Since he is unable to discern the number of nails, due to incomplete source material, he points out that 'si de Christo tamen quaeritur; nescio, et in dissensu Patrum non est meum arbitrari', that is, he knows not how to supply an answer to the question of the number of nails used to crucify Christ, and nor is it his task to decide a point disputed by the Church fathers.

³¹ Among the exemplars I have consulted are Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, shelf-mark P 596.4° Helmst. and P 696.4° Helmst.; see also the later editions listed in Haeghen F. van der – Lenger M.-Th. (eds.), *Bibliotheca Belgica. Bibliographie générale des Pays-Bas* (Brussels: 1964) vol. III 918–925.

³² On his life and work, see Grafton A., *Bring out Your Dead. The Past as Revelation* (Cambridge: 2001) 227–243; Nordmann V.A., *Justus Lipsius als Geschichtsforscher und Geschichtslehrer* (Heidelberg: 1932).

Lipsius's secular account of the theme of crucifixion and his reluctance to reconstruct the actual form of Christ's Crucifixion are discernible in the illustrations by Pieter van der Borcht that appeared as early as the first edition of *De Crvce libri tres*. Here one finds the image of a man crucified to a tree: he is a blasphemer who has insulted Ceres, the goddess of forest vegetation, by committing an outrage upon a tree. There are also various analogies to different cross shapes, for example, the shape of the human nose, of a bird's beating wings, of an oxen's yoke. Various especially cruel forms of crucifixion are shown in combination with images of cremation and animal baiting [Fig. 10]. In connection with Christ's Crucifixion, the crucial observation is that Lipsius attached no illustration to his discussion of the execution of the Son of God. Within his compendium, he proceeds from a religious-dogmatic depiction of the crucifixion to a catalogue of the different facets of this ancient form of capital punishment.

Lipsius's entire approach clearly distinguishes his work as an historical and archaeological rather than theological undertaking – although it has been repeatedly cited by scholars as if it were a doctrinal treatise. His method of deduction from the relevant material to be found in all the available ancient sources gives his book the character of a proto-scientific treatise on natural history: he conjoins secular history and the history of salvation, without granting an elevated position to the latter. In sum, *De Crvce libri tres* refrains from claiming that it has definitively visualized the Crucifixion of Christ.

Roughly fifty years after the first edition of the work and in direct response to it, the Lutheran theologian Georg Calixtus (1586–1656) published his response to the questions left open by Lipsius, in the *De vera forma crucis* of 1640 [Fig. 11].³³ At the beginning and end of his treatise two crosses are shown, of which the first one is a purely scientific sketch. Lipsius had indeed been right, as the accompanying text explains, about the form of the cross, but had overlooked one important detail in his reconstruction: the *sustentaculum*, affixed between the legs for the purpose of giving support to the suspended body of the

³³ Calixtus Georg, *De vera forma crucis. Appendix e paelectionibus Georgii Calixti S. Theol. D. et in Academia Iulia Professoris* (Brunswick, Duncker: 1640); I have consulted Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, xb 1769 and Li 5042. Cf. also Schüssler H., *Georg Calixt. Theologie und Kirchenpolitik. Eine Studie zur Ökumenizität des Luthertums* (Wiesbaden: 1961) 1–7; Husung M.J., “Georg Calixtus zu Helmstedt, ein gelehrter Drucker des 17. Jahrhunderts”, *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* 14 (1939) 283–301.

LIBER TERTIVS.

83



lianus appellat *Leoni* ^{Tertius}
concessum. Ita lego,
 non *Leone*, libello De
 Pudicitia extremo.
 Atq; ad hunc ipsum
 morem infamis & in-
 fanda illa turpitudo
 Neronis : quā viros ^{Es Suicidio}
 femināsq; ad stipitem ^{nisi}
 deligatos, ipse serpelle
 contectus, emissus ē
 caueā, medios inua-
 debat. Xiphilinus ē
 Dione : Μαρέγνα τοι
 κόρες σωρεγίς γυμνάς
 αποσθίων, θηλίου τέ θύ-
 νος δοργίναι ελάμβανε, &
 προσκίνων σφίσιο ήσελγανε, ὥστε τὶ έδίω.

C A P. XII.

De mortuorum in Cruce suspensione.

AC postremò Crux Fine alia, cùm non viui
 sed mortui in eâ appensi. Notabis. & quod
 nobis sollempne in rotâ exponere suppicio iam af-
 flos, ad notam sceleris & infamiam, id olim in
 Cruce, & Orientalibus præsertim. De Romanis
 nondum lègi. nisi quòd Cæsar piratas, à quibus
 captus esset, cùm in deditioñem redigisset, quoniam
 suffixurum se cruci iurauerat, iugulari prius iussit,

L 2 atque

Fig. 10. Pieter van der Borcht, *Forms of the Cross*, engraved illustration to Justus Lipsius, *De cruce libri tres. Ad sacram profanamque historiam utiles* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1594) 24.



Fig. 11. Anonymous, *The Cross with Sustentaculum*, engraved illustration to Georg Calixt, *De vera forma crucis* (Brunswick, Duncker: 1640) 28. Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel.

crucified.³⁴ This device is integrated into the second copper engraving showing the image of Christ being nailed to the cross with four nails. In this treatise by a Lutheran theologian dating from the mid-seventeenth century, knowledge of the historical forms of crucifixion, both secular and salvific, functions as a definitive proof of faith. In turn,

³⁴ Calixtus, *De vera forma crvcis* 1: 'Quin recte Lipsius: Nimis accurata ea fabrica, imo delicata. Nempe ex obviis et rudibus lignis crucis structae: et impacto in stipitem sustentaculo, quo vectari corporis moles posset, de pegmate operose addendo, cui cruciarius commode pedes imponeret, haut verosimile est sollicitos fuisse'.

his conclusions are grounded in the findings of a Catholic philologist concerned with biblical archaeology.

The examples discussed above prompt the following conclusions. Scholarly ‘blind spots’ determined by cultural socialization remain grounded in the partition of Western European Christianity into various denominations (notional divisions that persist even in today’s supposedly secular postmodernism). The written and pictorial sources of the confessionalized era, however, require a trans-confessional methodology, as well as trans-confessional access to cultural archives of both orthodox and reformed provenance. Such an approach goes hand in hand with the process of reflection on one’s own preconditioned position. The presumptive exclusion of certain sources on the basis of confessional differences contravenes the historical record, that in fact testifies to the use of images and texts across confessional lines. Instead, close analysis of all relevant written and visual sources and of all parties involved in early modern religious discourse is necessary, and as has been shown, the introductions and prefaces of the illustrated book projects of the period can provide us with fundamental insights. Only close comparison of this type can shed new light on the genesis and dependencies of different iconographies, such as those brought into play in Nadal’s famous book. These dependencies were occasionally obscured, if not suppressed, in the interest of confessionally bound religion, because they did not comply with the image the confessors wished to paint of their religion. The once famous *Iesu Christi vita*, a book mostly unknown today, published over fifty years before Nadal’s *Evangelicae historiae imagines* supplied the pattern for the latter, while a Lutheran broadsheet anticipated the allegorical concept of Rubens’s *Triumph of the Church*. Lipsius did not invent the ‘Counter-Reformation Crucifixion’, and nor was this his intention. In a broader sense, our understanding of the confessionally-bounded image must often move beyond pointing out its specifically Protestant or Catholic characteristics. Instead, such an approach requires us to bridge the gap between the confessional camps, and thus to acknowledge that the age of confessional conflict was not of necessity an age of confessional art.

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RESPONDING TO TOMB MONUMENTS.
MEDITATIONS AND IRRITATIONS OF AERNOUT VAN
BUCHEL IN ROME (1587–1588)

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Practically all Roman tomb monuments from the fifteenth and sixteenth century are based on a standard model, intended to arouse the viewers to meditate on the transience of life, death, and the hereafter.¹ Harking back to various traditions, they usually show a sculpted image of the deceased, which is either a portrait bust or a full-length representation showing him lying on a bier.² A coat of arms denotes his ancestry, while an inscription supplies more specific information, such as the dates of his birth and death. Usually the inscription also relates his most important deeds, lists his functions and titles, and praises his virtues and good qualities. Sometimes sculpted personifications of these virtues and/or other personal references to the deceased further decorate the monument. Representations of Christ, the Virgin Mary and/or other saints indicate that, thanks to his virtues and faith, the departed is now residing in heavenly spheres. Additional coats of arms or a few further words may specify the donor of the monument.

All this information together is meant make viewers meditate on matters of life and death, even those who had never known or heard of the deceased. The inscription and the sculpted personifications call to mind that those who lead a virtuous life may rise to high positions and in the end even ascend to God's proximity in heaven. The portrait of the deceased will literally give 'a face' to these rather general reflections

¹ On tomb monuments from the fifteenth and sixteenth century in Rome, see the website of the *Requiem Datenbank*: <http://www2.hu-berlin.de/requiem/db/>. Outdated but still valuable is Davies G.S., *Renascence: the Sculptured Tombs of the Fifteenth Century in Rome: with Chapters on the Previous Centuries from 1100* (London: 1910). Very relevant and recently published, but unfortunately too late to be included in this paper, is Götzmann J., *Römische Grabmäler der Hochrenaissance. Typologie – Ikoneographie – Stil. Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, 13 (Münster: 2010).

² By far the majority of these tomb monuments were made for men, and only a few for women.

and makes them more tangible, serving a concrete, visible example of a person who obtained eternal bliss after leading a good and virtuous life. Some personalized details of the decoration or phrases in the inscription may reinforce this effect. A fitting example that demonstrates this strategy of presenting the deceased is the tomb monument of Cardinal Ausias Despuig de Podio from c. 1500, in the church of Santa Sabina [Fig. 1].³ It includes all the elements just mentioned and shows the late cardinal as a sort of *exemplum virtutis* who, according to the motto on the casket, lived his life in constant awareness of its transience: VT MORIENS VIVERET VIXIT VT MORITVRVS ('In order to live when he died, he lived as if he was going to die').⁴ Viewers not acquainted with the cardinal or with his life, would accept this image of him and, taking it as a model, would be moved to reflect on their own lives. In other words, they would have no other way

³ On Cardinal Ausias Despuig de Podio (or de Poggio; 1423–83), see the relevant entry on the website *The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church*, <http://www.fiu.edu/~mirandas/bios1473.htm#Despuig>. On his tomb monument, see the entry in the *Requiem Datenbank*.

⁴ Similar mottos can be read on the monuments of Cardinals Antoniotto Palavicino (1441–1507) and Giorgio Costa (1406–1508). That of the former reads: ANTONIOTUS CARD. S. PRAXEDIS MORTEM PRAE OCVLIS SEMP[ER] HABENS VIVENS SIBI POS[VIT] AN[NO] MDI (Always having death in mind, Antoniotto Cardinal of S. Prassede, erected [this tomb monument] for himself while still alive, in the year 1501). This tomb monument originally stood in the old church of St Peter's, but we learn from a later inscription on the monument that due to the building activities in the sixteenth century ('ob disturbatum veteris sepulcri sedem in Vaticanae apsidis demolitione'), it was moved to S. Maria del Popolo in 1596, where it has been standing in the first chapel of the left aisle since 1630. See the relevant entry in the *Requiem Datenbank* and, more extensively, Roser H., *St. Peter in Rom im 15. Jahrhundert. Studien zu Architektur und skulpturaler Ausstattung. Römische Studien der Bibliotheca Hertziana* 19 (Munich: 2005) 235–240. According to Roser, 237, the monument was in storage ('in ein Depot') between ca. 1550 and the year of its removal to S. Maria del Popolo, 1596. However, in 1587 Aernout van Buchel (in Lanciani R.A., *Iter Italicum* 56; see below, n.5 and n.9) saw the monument in the nave of old St Peter's among various other discarded tombs and sculptures, which indicates that the monument was indeed moved from its original spot but never put 'in storage'. The motto on the monument of the Portuguese Cardinal Giorgio Costa, in the fourth chapel of the right aisle in S. Maria del Popolo, reads: GEORGIVS EP[ISCOPV]S ALBANEN[SIS] CARDINALIS ULYXBONEN[SIS] DVM SE MORTALEM ANIMO VOLVIT VIVENS SIBI POS[VIT] (Giorgio, bishop of Albano, cardinal from Lissabon, while he turned over in his mind that he was mortal, erected [this tomb monument] for himself while still alive). Cardinal Costa acquired the chapel in 1488 and had it richly decorated between then and 1496. His tomb monument originated in the same period. See the relevant entry in the *Requiem Datenbank* and, more extensively, Cavallaro A., "Capella Costa", in Cannata R. – Cavallaro A. – Strinati C. (eds.), *Umanesimo e primo Rinascimento in S. Maria del Popolo* (Rome: 1981) 79–82.



Fig. 1. *Tomb Monument of Cardinal Ausias Despuig de Podio (ca. 1500).*
Rome, S. Sabina. Photo: author.

of envisioning the cardinal than as a figure surrounded by the frame of virtues built around him. This raises the question of whether visitors to Rome actually responded to tomb monuments in this way. Did they really reflect on the departed person's life within the framework of merits and virtues provided by the monument? What happened if they went beyond the limits of this framework and considered the life of the deceased person within a context of different facts and information? To answer this question, we will focus on the reactions of a Dutchman who stayed in Rome during the winter from 1587 to 1588, Aernout van Buchel.⁵

Due to lack of money, Van Buchel's stay in Rome lasted only four months.⁶ Within this short period, however, he visited an impressive range of monuments, both ancient and modern. Back in his native town of Utrecht in The Netherlands, he elaborated on the notes he had made in Rome and expanded upon them with a good deal of supplementary information drawn from classical and contemporary sources. Both the books with notes that Van Buchel made in Rome, as well as the final manuscript of his travel report written several years later, have survived. They are now in the Utrecht University Library.⁷ A comparison of the notes made on the spot with the text of the final manuscript allows us to reconstruct how, over the years, Van Buchel's knowledge and understanding of what he had seen in Rome developed. It is not clear whether Van Buchel intended his final travel report just for private use, or if he planned to publish it at some point.⁸ In any

⁵ On Aernout van Buchel (Arnoldus Buchellius, 1565–1641), see most extensively Langeraad L.A. van, "Het leven van Arend van Buchell", in Brom G. – Langeraad L.A. van (eds.), *Diarium van Arend van Buchell. Werken uitgegeven door het Historisch Genootschap*, derde serie, n° 21 (Amsterdam: 1907), I–XCIII, and Pollmann J.S., *Religious Choice in the Dutch Republic: the Reformation of Arnoldus Buchelius (1565–1641)* (Manchester: 1999).

⁶ Van Buchel arrived in Rome on November 9, 1587, and left on March 7, 1588. During this period, he made a trip to Naples, from February 7 to 28.

⁷ The two notebooks are Hss 761 (call number: 5 L 20: notes on his trip through Italy and stay in Rome) and 1640 (call number: 5 L 24: notes on Naples). The final version of his stay in Italy is included in the *Commentarius Rerum Quotidianarum, 1560–1599*, Hs. 798, part 2, fol. 1–91r (call number: 6 E 15). On this manuscript, see <http://vitrine.library.uu.nl/en/texts/Hs798.htm>.

⁸ From the "Praefatio" to his *Commentarius Rerum Quotidianarum*, which includes the Italian journey, it appears that Van Buchel wanted to write a chronicle of memorable events, in the tradition of antique Greek and Roman authors (Brom – van Langeraad, *Diarium* 5–6). Thus he noted down everything he considered important, often furnished with his own commentary: 'quicquid memoria dignum hactenus vel viderim vel audiverim, brevi hoc commentariolo complectar' (anything worth remembering

case, a printed edition of it did not appear until long after his death, around 1900, but the text of this edition is incomplete and not free from errors.⁹

Van Buchel's main interests were history and inscriptions. Consequently, he appreciated the monuments he saw mainly for their historical value and/or lettering, and not in the first place for their aesthetic qualities. Thus, it comes as no surprise that tomb monuments play an important role in his report. He saw many of them during his visit to St. Peter's, which was in a state of chaos due to the construction of the new building. The obelisk at the south side of the church had just been moved to the front, and work on the construction of the dome was in full swing.¹⁰ Parts of the church were blocked off and many monuments had been moved from the choir area to the nave. As a result, Van Buchel was confronted with a confusing array of altars, tomb

that hitherto I have seen or heard, I will include in this short treatise). Although Van Buchel does address his reader(s), it is not clear if he had a specific audience in mind. Thus the second folio of the manuscript (Brom – van Langeraad, *Diarium 1*) states that it contains many affairs that are meant 'lectoribus pro cuiusque ingenio vel utilia vel saltem non iniucunda futura' (for readers, according to their disposition, to be either useful or at least not unpleasant). The first folio contains a poem 'ad lectorem curiosem' (to the curious reader; Brom – van Langeraad, *Diarium 2*). Van Buchel does not say if he ever intended the manuscript to be published. See Pollmann, *Religious choice* 16–24.

⁹ The so-called *Iter Italicum* was edited by Rodolfo A. Lanciani, in three successive issues of the *Archivio della R. Società romana di Storia Patria* 23 (1900) 1–66; 24 (1901) 49–63 and 25 (1902) 103–35. In 1901, the three issues were published in one book containing the complete text: Lanciani R.A. (ed.), *A. Buchellius. Iter Italicum* (Rome). In the following notes, I will refer to this book edition. My colleague from the Latin department at the University of Groningen, Sjef Kemper, and I are working on a new, complete edition with an extensive commentary. Up to now, this has resulted in the following publications: de Jong J.L., "An Art Loving Dutchman in Florence: Observations on Aernout van Buchell's Appreciation of Contemporary Works of Art in the 'pulcra et florente Hetruriae urbe', 1588", in Boschloo A.W.A. – Grasman E. (eds.), *Aux quatre vents: a Festschrift for Bert W. Meijer* (Florence: 2002) 263–266; de Jong J.L. – Kemper J.A.R., "Historiam hanc diu quaesitam invenire non potui: Aernout van Buchel bij de Engelenburcht en op het Capitool", in van Egmond M. – Jaski B. – Mulder H. (eds.), *Bijzonder onderzoek. Een ontdekkingsreis door de Bijzondere Collecties van de Universiteitsbibliotheek Utrecht* (Utrecht: 2009) 48–55. Soon to appear is de Jong J.L. – Kemper J.A.R., "La visione di Roma dell'olandese Arnoldus Buchellius (dicembre 1587)", in *Studi Umanistici Piceni* 31 (2011) 187–198.

¹⁰ For the building history of St Peter's in the sixteenth century, see Francia E., *Storia della costruzione del Nuovo San Pietro da Michelangelo a Bernini* (Rome: 1989); Satzinger G., "Die Baugeschichte von Neu-St. Peter", and Schütze S., "Die Ausstattung von Neu-St. Peter", both in Frings J. (ed.), *Kunst und Kultur im Rom der Päpste* (cat. exh. Bonn, Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland), vol. II: *Barock im Vatikan: Kunst und Kultur im Rom der Päpste II, 1572–1676* (Leipzig: 2005), resp. 45–74 and 117–138.

monuments and other pieces of church furniture.¹¹ Yet he managed to identify quite a few of them, through a careful reading of the inscriptions and with the help of some guidebooks. Thus, he recognized most of the tombs of the popes from the fifteenth century.¹² Curiously, he did not record the long and beautiful inscription on the sarcophagus of Nicholas V (1447–55), but he did notice that the tomb monument of Pope Sixtus IV (1471–84), made by Antonio del Pollaiuolo, was *artificiosum* (skillful, artistic).¹³ He also recognized a second tomb monument that was made by that same artist, for Pope Innocent VIII (1484–92), which was finished in 1498 [Fig. 2]. When Van Buchel saw this latter monument, in 1587, it was no longer on its original place in the south side of the nave, near the crossing. Around 1507, it had been moved and placed against the wall of the most northern aisle of the nave, next to the Chapel of the Holy Lance [Fig. 3].¹⁴ Van Buchel does not indicate that he was familiar with the monument's history and most probably did not know that it originally must have looked a little different. The monument was to be modified again after Van Buchel's visit. During the completion of the new nave of St Peter's it was dismantled, and following various vicissitudes it was finally reassembled

¹¹ On the work on the new church of St Peter's and its consequences for the tomb monuments in it, see Roser, *St. Peter in Rom*, and Richardson C.M., "Ruined, unintended and derelict: fifteenth-century papal tombs in St Peter's", in Burke J. – Bury M., (eds.), *Art and Identity in Early Modern Rome* (Aldershot: 2008) 191–207. Some idea of what the church looked like when Van Buchel visited it, can be gleaned from Cerriati M. (ed.), *Tiberii Alpharani De Basilicae Vaticanae antiquissima et nova structura. Studi e testi della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* 26 (Rome: 1914).

¹² *Iter Italicum* 52–53.

¹³ *Iter Italicum* 52: 'In choro veteri, in pavimento sepulcrum est ex aere artificiosum'. Instead of the inscription on the monument of Nicholas V, Van Buchel recorded those on the tombs of Paul II (1464–1371) and Sixtus IV.

¹⁴ On the tomb monument of Innocent VIII and its history, see Kusch B., "Zum Grabmal Innocenz' VIII. in Alt-St. Peter zu Rom", *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 41 (1997) 361–376; Kummer S., "Vom Grabmal Innozenz' VIII. des Antonio Pollaiuolo zum Grabmal Urbans VIII. von Gianlorenzo Bernini", in Borchardt K. – Bünz E. (eds.), *Forschungen zur Reichs-, Papst- und Landesgeschichte*, (Stuttgart: 1998), II, 885–898; Roser, *St. Peter in Rom*, 197–206, and idem, "'In innocentia mea ingressus svm...': das Grabmal Innozenz' VIII. in St. Peter", in Karsten A. – Zitzlsperger P. (eds.), *Tod und Verklärung: Grabmalskultur in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Cologne: 2004) 219–338; Wright A., *The Pollaiuolo Brothers: The Arts of Florence and Rome* (New Haven: 2005) 359–387 and 528–529. Relevant information and good pictures can be found on the *Requiem Datenbank*.



Fig. 2. [COL. PL. XVIII] Antonio del Pollaiuolo, *Tomb Monument of Pope Innocent VIII* (1492–1498). Rome, St Peter. Photo: author.



Fig. 3. Anonymous, drawing of the *Tomb Monument of Pope Innocent VIII after 1507* (ca. 1600). Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett. Image © bpk, Berlin / Kupferstichkabinett, SMB.

in 1621, at the place where it still stands, against one of the pillars in the southern aisle [Fig. 2].¹⁵

The reconstruction of 1621 made the monument quite different from the way it appeared when Van Buchel saw it. The most important change was that the reclining statue of the departed pope had been placed below rather than above the statue of the sitting pope. Moreover, the marble frame with the coat of arms of the monument's sponsor – Cardinal Lorenzo Cybo – had been discarded, and an inscription listing the pope's deeds was added under the casket.¹⁶ It is not necessary, however, to discuss the monument's history and all its changes in detail, as Van Buchel's description is rather short. After listing several other papal tombs, he simply mentions that there is yet one more, belonging to Innocent VIII, with a bronze statue of the pope and an inscription taken from the book of Psalms that alludes to the pope's name: *In innocentia mea ingressus redime me, Domine, et miserere mei*; that is, 'I will walk in mine integrity; redeem me, Lord, and be merciful to me'.¹⁷ Van Buchel did not literally quote the second, brief inscription on the monument (under the statue of the sitting pope), but did use it to obtain some essential dates about Innocent's pontificate.¹⁸ This statue of the sitting pope was – and still is – surrounded by representations in relief of the four cardinal virtues, which characterize

¹⁵ On the later vicissitudes of the monument and its final reconstruction in 1621, see in particular Kummer, "Vom Grabmal Innozenz' VIII."

¹⁶ D.O.M. / INNOCENTIO VIII CYBO PONT. MAX. / ITALICAE PACIS PERPETVO CVSTODI / NOVI ORBIS SVO AEVO INVENTI GLORIA / REGI HISPANIARVM CATHOLICI NOMINE IMPOSITO / CRVCIS SACROSSANCTE REPERTO TITVLO / LANCEA QVAE CHRISTI HAVSIT LATVS / A BAIAZETE TVRCARVM TYRANNO DONO MISSA / AETERNVM INSIGNI / MONVMNTVM E VETERE BASILICA HVC TRANSLATVM / ALBERICVS CYBO MALASPINA / PRINCEPS MASSAE / FERENTII DVX MARCHIO CARRARIAE ETC. / PRONEPOS / ORNATIVS AUGVSTIVSQ. POSVIT ANNO DOM. MDCXXI.

¹⁷ Psalm 25 (26): 11. The inscription actually reads: *IN INNOCENTIA MEA INGRESSVS SVM REDIME ME DOMINE ET MISERERE MEI*. In the course of transcribing it, Van Buchel must have lost the word 'sum'. It is still in his books with notes that he made on the spot (Hs 761, see above, n.7, fol. 138r), but it is lacking in the final manuscript (see n.7, fol. 28r).

¹⁸ In its present form the inscription reads: INNOCENTIVS VIII CIIBO / IANUENSIS PONT. OPT. MAX. / VIXIT ANNOS VII MENS. X DI XXV. OBIT AN. DNI. MCDIIIC M. IULII. The mistakes in it ('Ciibo' instead of 'Cibo', 'vixit' instead of 'sedit', and 'MCDIIIC' instead of 'MCCCCXCII') may be the result of the reconstruction of 1621. Thanks to Van Buchel's description, it is possible to reconstruct the original text: 'Est aliud ad parietem Innocentii VIII papae ex aere cum statua ac hoc ex Davide versiculo: "In innocentia mea ingressus redime me, Domine, et miserere mei." Obiit anno .MCCCCXCII., pontificatus anno .VIII., XXVI. iulii.' As Lanciani's transcription (*Iter Italicum* 53) is not entirely correct, I have quoted after the original text of the manuscript (see above, n.7), fol. 28r.

him as a virtuous ruler, while originally the three theological virtues were appropriately situated above the figure of the pontiff lying in state [compare Fig. 2 and 3]. Together with the biblical inscription, they conjure up an image of a wise, incorruptible and pious leader. Yet the monument supplies very little concrete information about the pope.¹⁹ This seems to have frustrated Van Buchel. For him, the seven virtues and the biblical quote were not enough to frame Pope Innocent as an *exemplum virtutis* or – more appropriately – an *exemplum innocentiae*. From the notes he made in Rome, it is not clear if he was already familiar with the life of Pope Innocent VIII, for he simply copied the biblical inscription and the dates.²⁰ But when he wrote the final version of his report, he adduced additional information from a totally different context and thus went across the intended limits of the monument's framework.²¹ First of all, he referred to the *Acta Romanorum Pontificum* by John Bale (Jo(h)annes Bal(a)eus, 1495–1563), which were first published in 1558 and reprinted several times. What these *Acts of the Roman Popes* involve is sufficiently clear from the subtitle, which explains that they cover the lives of all the supreme pontiffs from the beginning through Pope Paul IV, ‘who is now tyrannizing the Church’ (*qui nunc in Ecclesia tyrannizat*).²² Bale’s usual pattern of describing the individual popes’ lives consists of a list of their deeds, with a strong preference for the bad and least successful ones, followed by negative comments or stinging witticisms of contemporaries. Thus, it is no surprise to read in Van Buchel’s final manuscript that, according to John Bale, the life of Pope Innocent VIII was ‘full of wickedness’.²³ Yet it is curious that Van Buchel would consult this highly anti-papal book, as in other instances he extensively used the

¹⁹ In spite of the claims made in the seventeenth-century inscription (see above, n.16), the pope did not have many achievements to boast of. See Roses, “In innocentia mea ingressvs svm...” 223 and 236, and Wright, *Pollaiuolo brothers* 398.

²⁰ Hs 761 (see above, n.7), fol. 138r.

²¹ *Iter Italicum* 53: ‘Huius [sc. Innocentii] vide a Balaeo vitam descriptam sceleribus plenam, et adde Marulli versus’.

²² *Acta Romanorum pontificum, a dispersione discipulorum Christi usque ad tempora Pauli Quarti, qui nunc in Ecclesia tyrannizat* (Basel, Joannes Oporinus: 1558). Reprints and translations were soon to follow (1559 [s.l.], 1560 [s.l.], and a German translation by Zacharias Müntzer in 1571 [s.l.]), and continued to appear into the seventeenth century. Van Buchel owned a copy of Bale’s *Acta*, but it is not clear which edition. The relevant item in the *Index Alphabeticus Librorum Latinorum qui sunt in Biblioteca Ar. Buchellii Batavi* (University Library Utrecht: Hs 7 E 12), fol. 42v, reads: ‘Io. Balaei Angli. de pontificibus Romanis lib. VII’.

²³ See above, n.21.

better known and more balanced papal histories by Flavio Biondo and Bartolommeo Platina.²⁴ In fact, this is the only time he refers to the *Acts of the Roman Popes*. Bale's life of Pope Innocent VIII concludes with two sneering epigrams, which Van Buchel also mentions, without literally quoting them.²⁵ Bale – and Van Buchel in his wake – ascribed these verses to Michael Marullus (c. 1458–1500), although only one was actually included in his *Epigrammaton Libri* (book IV, 25). It is a satirical epitaph on the Pope:

Filth, gluttony, avarice, and apathetic sloth
Are lying in this tomb in which you, Number Eight, are buried.

‘Spurcicies, gula, avaritia atque ignavia deses / Hoc,
Ovtave, iacent, quo tegeris, tumulo’.²⁶

²⁴ In the case of the tomb monument of Pope Innocent VII, which he described immediately after that of Innocent VIII, he noted (*Iter Italicum* 53): ‘Legitur et Innocentii VII Sulmonensis epitaphium. Quod est apud Platinam’. In the case of the paintings in the Sala Regia, he made extensive use of Platina's *Vitae Pontificum* (first edition: Venice, Joannes de Colonia and Johannes Manthen: 1479), of which he owned several editions, including an updated edition by Onofrio Panvinio (Louvain: 1573). Flavio Biondo's *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum imperii decades* was written between 1439 and 1453 and appeared in print already in 1483 (Venice). Van Buchel owned the Basel 1533 edition. Van Buchel's book collection can be reconstructed with the help of his own listing of the books he owned (see above, n.22), and the auction catalogue of books sold after his death, *Catalogus librorum Clarissimi viri, D. Arnoldi Buchelii, JC^ti*. *Quorum auctio habebitur Maji die Martis in aedibus defuncti, in plateâ vulgò (de Camp) dicta hora 8 matutinâ* (Utrecht, Aegidius Roman: 1642; in the University Library Utrecht: C oct 1688 RAR.). On the Sala Regia, see de Jong J.L., “The Painted Decoration of the Sala Regia: Intention and Reception”, in Weddigen T. – de Blaauw S. – Kempers B. – Roth A. (eds.), *Functions and Decorations: Art and Ritual at the Vatican Palace in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Capellae Apostolicae Sixtinaeque Collectanea Acta Monumenta* 9 (Rome: 2003) 153–168, esp. 155, and idem, “Propagating Venice's Finest Hour. Vicissitudes of Giuseppe Porta Salviati's Painting of Pope Alexander III and Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in the Sala Regia of the Vatican Palace”, in de Vries A. (ed.), *Cultural Mediators. Artists and Writers at the Crossroads of Tradition, Innovation and Reception in the Low Countries and Italy 1450–1650* (Leuven/Paris/Dudley MA.: 2008) 109–125, esp. 112.

²⁵ See above, n.21. In 1588, Cipriano de Valera (ca. 1532–ca. 1600), a former monk of Seville who took refuge in England in 1588, included the same two epigrams in his life of Innocent VIII, in the first of the *Dos Tratados: El primero es del Papa y de su autoridad, El segundo es de la misa* (London, Arnold Hatfield: 1588) 164. See Kinder A.G., “Religious Literature as an Offensive Weapon: Cipriano de Valera's Part in England's War with Spain”, *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 19, 2 (1988) 223–235, esp. 226–227.

²⁶ *Michaelis Marulli Carmina*, ed. A. Perosa (Zurich: 1951) 96. From the auction catalogue (see above, n. 24, fol. 78, nr. 90), it appears that Van Buchel owned the edition from 1561 (Paris, Jacques Dupuis). The epigram is also included in the *Pasquilorum tomi duo* (Basel, Johannes Oporinus: 1544) 78, under the heading: ‘Epitaphium Innocentii Octavi, Marull.’

The second one, which is often ascribed to Marullus although I have not been able to trace it in his works, refers to the many children that Pope Innocent supposedly fathered:

Why are you looking for confirmation whether [Pope] Cybo is male or female?

Just look at the flock of children as convincing pieces of evidence.

A guilty person, he fathered eight boys and just as many girls.

Rome could rightly call him: 'Father'!

Quid quaeris testes sit mas an femina Cibo?

Respic natorum pignora certa gregem:

Octo nocens²⁷ pueros genuit totidemque puellas.

Hunc merito poterit dicere Roma patrem!²⁸

These comments on the tomb of Innocent VIII are too short to reconstruct what exactly Van Buchel thought, but it is obvious that the monument did not elicit the intended kind of meditation. At first glance, neither the seven virtues nor the biblical inscription were effective in evoking the desired image of a wise, incorruptible and pious leader. On second thoughts, having become familiar with the works of John Bale and Michael Marullus, Van Buchel considered Pope Innocent VIII mainly within a framework of wickedness and vice. Consequently, whatever thoughts the statues and the inscription on the monument may have called to Van Buchel's mind, they would certainly have had an ironic ring.

²⁷ Some versions have 'recens', but 'nocens' seems more fitting in reference to Innocent.

²⁸ This epigram may have grown out of a pasquinade, as the last two lines occur in the *Pasquillorum tomi duo* from 1544, 78, where they are attributed to Marullus ('De Innocentii VIII. Marull.'). However, Marucci V., *Pasquinate del cinque e seicento* (Rome: 1988) 29, doubts the authorship of Marullus and suggests that the pasquinade is directed against Pope Alexander VI (1492–1503), who had (also) fathered several children. To me, the combination of the words 'octo nocens' seems to refer unmistakably to '(In)nocens Octavus'. On this epigram, and the number of Innocent's children, see also von Pastor L., *Geschichte der Päpste im Zeitalter der Renaissance von der Wahl Innocenz' VIII. bis zum Tode Julius' II. Geschichte der Päpste seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters* 3 (Freiburg im Breisgau: 1899⁴) 183, n.1. See also above, n.25.

The clause 'sit mas an femina' in the first line may be derived from Varro's discussion on the origin of the word 'umbilicum' in *De Lingua Latina* VII, 17: '[...] per id quo discernitur homo mas an femina sit'. More probably, though, it refers to the story of Livy (*Ab urbe condita* XXVII, 37) about a child whose sex could not be determined: 'incertus mas an femina esset natus erat'. As this was considered a bad omen, the child was banished from Roman soil and thrown into the sea. Maybe this is also implied in the case of Pope Innocent VIII, but most likely, the poet refers to the custom that a pope, once elected, had to undergo a physical examination to prove his sex.

Van Buchel also examined the tomb monuments in the church of S. Maria in Trastevere in Rome.²⁹ One that particularly attracted his attention was that of the prominent Polish Cardinal Stanislas Hosius, who had died eight years earlier, in 1579.³⁰ The monument is situated at the entrance of the choir, on the right side [Fig. 4].³¹ It was erected in the early 1580s by a team of three unidentified Flemish artists, on the authority of the cardinal's secretary and his nephew.³² It is not known who made the design, but there is no doubt that Hosius's other secretary – Tomasz Treter – was deeply involved in it.³³ The monument fits perfectly within the standard model of sixteenth century tomb monuments in Rome.³⁴ It shows a sculpted portrait bust of the deceased cardinal [Fig. 5], and his coat of arms above it [Fig. 6]. Under the bust is a lengthy inscription, which relates the dates of the cardinal's life, his titles, his achievements and good qualities, and mentions the names of the monument's donors.³⁵ At the bottom, a relief shows a collection of books that refer to the many publications in

²⁹ *Iter Italicum* 64–65.

³⁰ On the Polish/German Cardinal Stanisław Hozjusz (in Latin: Hosius; 1504–79), see the entry on the website *The Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church*: <http://www.fiu.edu/~mirandas/bios1561.htm#Hosius>.

³¹ On this monument, see Buchowiecki W., *Handbuch der Kirchen Roms. Der römische Sakralbau in Geschichte und Kunst von der altchristlichen Zeit bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. IV, ed. by B. Kuhn-Forte, (Vienna: 1997) 781; Bertelli C., "Di un cardinale dell'Impero e di un canonico polacco, in Santa Maria in Trastevere", *Paragone. Arte* 28/327 (1977) 88–107; and most recently and extensively, Jurkowlaniec G., "A Surprising Pair. The Tombstones of Cardinal Hosius and Cardinal Altemps' Son, Roberto, in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Trastevere in Rome", in Jurkowlaniec G. (ed.), *Artem quaevis alit terra. Studia professori Piotr Skubiszewski anno aetatis suaee septuagesimo quinto oblata. Ikonotheka*, 19 (Warsaw: 2006) 221–236.

³² Stanisłas Reszka and Stanisłas Hozjusz, according to the inscription on the monument (see below, n. 35). On them and the Flemish artists, see Jurkowlaniec, "A Surprising Pair" 227–229.

³³ Jurkowlaniec, "A Surprising Pair" 227–231.

³⁴ Jurkowlaniec, "A Surprising Pair" 224–225.

³⁵ D. O. M. / STANISLAO HOSIO POLONO. S. R. E. PRESBYT[ERO] CARD[INALI] VARMEN[SI] / EP[ISCOPO] MAIORI PENIT[ENTIARIO] VITÆ SANCTITATE ERVDITIONIS / ET ELOQVENTIÆ GLORIA CELEBERR[IMO] / CATHOLICÆ FIDEI ACERR[IMO] PROPVGNATORI / QVI CVM ANTIQVAE PROBITATIS ET EPISCOP[I] VIGILANTIÆ / PRÆSTANTIAM IN HVMILITATE CHARITATE CASTITATE BENE/FICENTIA EXPRESSISSET HERET[ICAS] SECTAS SCRIPTIS ET CONSELLIIS / SAPIENTIIS[IME] FERVERENTER OPPVGNASSET MVLTOS AB ERRORIB[VS] / REVOCASSET GRAVISS[IMIS]Q[VE] LEGATIONIB[VS] PRO PACE ECCL[ESIÆ] DEI / CVM APVD CAROL[VM] V. ET FERD[INANDEM]. CÆSS[ARES] TVM PRECIPVE IN / S[ACRO] CONC[ILIO] TRID[ENTINO] PII IIII PONT[IFICIS] NOMINE FELICISS[IME] PERFVNCTVS / CHRIST[IANÆ] REPVB[LICÆ] PLVRIMVM PROFVISSET / OMNIVM VIRTVTVM LAVDIB[VS] ET EXEMPLIS AD IMITAN/DVM ABVNDANS OBDORMIVIT IN DOMINO NONIS AVG[VSTI] / ANNO MDLXXIX ÆTATIS SVA LXXVI / STANISLAVS



Fig. 4. [COL. PL. XIX] Tomb Monument of Cardinal Stanislas Hosius (Stanisław Hozjusz) (ca. 1580–1586). Rome, S. Maria in Trastevere. Photo: author.

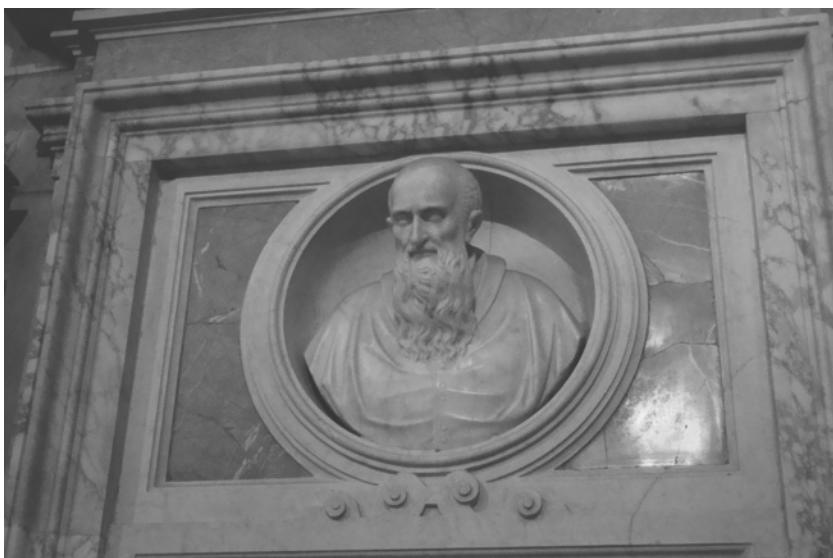


Fig. 5. *Portrait of Cardinal Stanislas Hosius (Stanisław Hozjusz)*. Part of his tomb monument, ca. 1580–1586. Rome, S. Maria in Trastevere. Photo: author.



Fig. 6. *Coat of Arms of Cardinal Stanislas Hosius (Stanisław Hozjusz)*. Part of his tomb monument, ca. 1580–1586. Rome, S. Maria in Trastevere.
Photo: author.



Fig. 7. Relief with books. Part of the tomb monument of Cardinal Stanislas Hosius (Stanisław Hozjusz), ca. 1580–1586. Rome, S. Maria in Trastevere.
Photo: author.

which the cardinal defended the Catholic Church against its detractors, along with a quote from *I John* 2:26: ‘These things have I written unto you concerning them that would lead you astray’ [Fig. 7].³⁶ Above the monument are two painted virtues: Prudence and Temperance [Fig. 6]. These, however, were added a few years later, in 1586.³⁷

Hosius’s tomb monument has its counterpart in a monument on the left side of the choir’s entrance [Fig. 8]. Originally, it was intended for Marco Sittico Altemps, Hosius’s successor as titular cardinal of S. Maria in Trastevere. Cardinal Altemps started its construction in 1584, while he was still alive and work on the Hosius monument was already

PATRVO & STAN[ISLAVS] RESCVS PATRONO BENE/FICENTISS[IMO] EXECVT[ORES]
TEST[AMENTI] POS[VERE].

³⁶ HAEC SCRIPSI VOBIS DE IIS QUI SEDUCUNT VOS. The Latin text of the Bible (Vulgate) reads: ‘Hæc scripsi vobis de eis qui seducunt vos’.

³⁷ Bertelli, “Di un cardinale dell’Impero” 91–92; Jurkowlaniec, “A Surprising Pair” 227, 234 and 236.



Fig. 8. [COL. PL. XX] *Tomb Monument of Roberto Altemps, Duke of Gallesse*, ca. 1584–1589. Rome, S. Maria in Trastevere. Photo: J.A.R. Kemper.



Fig. 9. Rome, S. Maria in Trastevere: choir with the tomb monuments of Cardinal Hosius (right) and Roberto Altemps (left). Photo: author.

underway.³⁸ Two years later, however, the plans changed drastically. In that year, 1586, the cardinal's son Roberto (obviously illegitimate) died suddenly at the age of twenty. This son had led a rather dubious life before he was finally dispatched to Avignon in France, to serve the papal army.³⁹ Hence, Cardinal Altemps must have decided to save the young man's reputation and have him be remembered as an honorable person. As a result, Roberto Altemps was buried on the place that was destined for his father, Cardinal Altemps, and the monument was turned into a counterpart of Cardinal Hosius's tomb [Fig. 9].⁴⁰ While

³⁸ On this monument, see Petrarolla P. – Cannata P. in Madonna M.L. (ed.), *Roma di Sisto V. Le arti e la cultura* (Rome: 1993) 430–431, and in particular the perceptive analysis by Jurkowlaniec, “A Surprising Pair” 231–236.

³⁹ Jurkowlaniec, “A Surprising Pair” 236, characterizes Roberto as ‘a positively indecent man’.

⁴⁰ Jurkowlaniec, “A Surprising Pair” 231–236. According to the inscription, the monument was erected by Roberto's ‘most sorrowful’ widow Cornelia Orsini: CORNELIA VRSINA VIRGINII F[ILIA] CONIVGI / CLARRISSIMO MOESTISSIMA POSVIT. However, this mention of her name may only serve to cover up the embarrassing fact that his father was the titular cardinal of the S. Maria in Trastevere.



Fig. 10. Relief with arms and armour. Part of the tomb monument of Roberto Altemps, ca. 1584–1589. Rome, S. Maria in Trastevere. Photo: author.

Hosius was shown as a staunch defender of the Church through his writings, Roberto Altemps was presented – not quite in accordance with the facts of his life – as a defender of the Church with military means [Fig. 7, 10]. At the same time, he was contrasted as an agent of the active live to Cardinal Hosius as a representative of the contemplative life. The two personifications that were added to Hosius's tomb in 1586 reflect this change of plans [Fig. 6]. They represent the contemplative virtues of Prudence and Temperance. The two corresponding, sculpted virtues on the Altemps tomb proved to be problematic. Fortitude and Justice would have been the most likely options, but they did not seem appropriate for someone who had led a life like that of Roberto. Consequently, Victory and Minerva were represented instead [Fig. 8].⁴¹

It appears from documents in the Altemps archives that payments were made to the sculptor Giovanni Antonio Peracha for work on the tomb for Roberto Altemps, including the two sculptures on the top,

⁴¹ Jurkowlaniec, “A Surprising Pair” 235–236.

in 1588 and 1589. It is usually assumed, therefore, that the monument dates from these years.⁴² However, as Cardinal Altemps had planned the tomb for himself, parts of it must already have been in place in 1586, when Roberto died. Moreover, Van Buchel already referred to it in the report of his visit of the church of S. Maria in Trastevere in December 1587, and specifically mentions the inscription: ‘The epitaph [of Cardinal Hosius] is in the book with my epitaphs, in which there is also another, of Roberto Altemps, duke of Galles.’⁴³ [Fig. 11] Possibly, therefore, the tomb monument had already been partially erected when Van Buchel saw it: the stone with the epitaph must have been on view, but the sculptures on top (and perhaps also the portrait bust) were still missing. This means that Van Buchel may or could not have sensed that the monument of Roberto Altemps was to be seen as a counterpart of that of Cardinal Hosius – and indeed, Van Buchel only mentions the epitaph and not the monument of Roberto Altemps. Thus, he focused all his attention on Hosius’s monument.

That the tomb of Cardinal Hosius fascinated Van Buchel is not surprising, as the relief showing a collection of books would certainly have appealed to a bibliomaniac like him [Fig. 7]. Moreover, the relief contains two inscriptions, which he immediately copied. One is the verse from the first letter of St. John, which alludes to Hosius’s many writings in defense of the Catholic Church. This allusion is easy to grasp, as the long epitaph above the relief specifically mentions Hosius’s books against ‘heretical sects’ and those who err in matters of faith.⁴⁴ The second inscription on the relief is hailed by Van Buchel as ‘an eulogy that such a staunch defender of the papal cause is truly worthy of’. It reads: ‘He is not a Catholic, who dissents from the Roman Church in the doctrines of faith’.⁴⁵ Interestingly, four hundred years later, during a visit to S. Maria in Trastevere, the Polish Pope John Paul II reacted

⁴² Friedel H., “Die Cappella Altemps in S. Maria in Trastevere”, *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 17 (1978) 94–95, 115; Petrarola – Cannata, in *Roma di Sisto V* 430–431.

⁴³ *Iter Italicum* 64–65: ‘Epitaphium est in Epith. meorum libro, ubi et aliud est Roberti ab Altaemps, Galesii ducis’. Curiously, there is no mention of Roberto Altemps’s tomb or inscription in the book with notes made on the spot (Hs 761, see above, n.7, fols. 153v–154r), which seems to indicate that Van Buchel gathered the information on the Altemps tomb only in a later stage.

⁴⁴ See above, n.35 and n.36.

⁴⁵ *Iter Italicum* 65: ‘Ad sepulcrum Hosii hoc habetur dignum tam valido pontificiae causae defensori elogium: “Catolicus non est qui a Romana Ecclesia in fidei doctrina discordat”’.



Fig. 11. Inscription. Part of the tomb monument of Roberto Altemps, ca. 1584–1589. Rome, S. Maria in Trastevere. Photo: J.A.R. Kemper.

in almost the same way, quoting the inscription and praising Cardinal Hosius for *un conspicuo personale contributo per il rafforzamento della fede e della Chiesa* – ‘a conspicuous personal contribution to the reinforcement of the Catholic faith and the Church’.⁴⁶

So far, Van Buchel seems to have considered the tomb monument in the way it was intended: he derived his knowledge about Cardinal Hosius from the long epitaph and apparently accepted that he was an honorable champion of the Catholic Church. Then, however, Van Buchel introduced some ‘external’ information, which he must have gathered in the years after his visit, when he worked on the final manuscript.⁴⁷ It changed his perception of the monument significantly.

⁴⁶ See the report of Pope John Paul’s visit on April 27, 1980, at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/homilies/1980/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19800427_visita-parrocchia_it.html.

⁴⁷ The ‘external’ information, consisting of a reference to Lactantius (see below, n.48) is missing in the notebook with observations made in Rome on the spot (Hs 761, see above, n.7, fol. 153v–154r). This means that it was added later, when Van Buchel wrote the final version of the *Iter*.

This ‘external information’ came from two sides. One side was an early Church father, and the other Van Buchel’s personal experience of the situation in the Catholic Church. Having quoted approvingly the statement that true Catholics should not dissent from the Roman Church in the doctrines of faith, Van Buchel continues: ‘Which is true when it refers to the old Church, but not at all to the present corrupt one. Lactantius Firmianus writes that this is the true Catholic Church, in which there are reverence for God, confession and repentance, and which treats in a wholesome manner the sins and wounds to which the weakness of the flesh is liable’.⁴⁸ Understandably, when Pope John Paul II visited Hosius’s tomb he had totally different things to say about the Church.

From Van Buchel’s words, one may infer that his view on the Catholic Church of his time was not very positive. His stay in Rome took place at the height of the so-called Counter Reformation, when Pope Sixtus V (1585–1590) worked very hard to counter the Protestant challenge and put an end to a multitude of abuses within the Church. Yet Van Buchel was struck by the luxury and arrogance of the clergy and the papal court, and repeatedly commented on it. Thus he described the Roman Curia as a place where ‘true Harpies flock together, enticed by the abominable morals of the clergy and the lenience towards licentiousness and criminality’. He concluded this tirade with a verse from Battista Mantovano (1447–1516), whose name, however, he does not mention: *Omnia cum liceant non licet esse pium*: ‘While everything is allowed, it is not allowed to be pious’.⁴⁹ Van Buchel was also upset

⁴⁸ *Iter Italicum*, 65: ‘si de vetere, verum, si de hac corrupta, minime. Lactantius Firmianus veram catolicam ecclesiam hanc esse scribit, in qua est religio, confessio et poenitentia, quae peccata et vulnera, quibus est subiecta imbecillitas (Lanciani’s edition has incorrectly: imbecillitatis) carnis, salubriter curaret. Restant haec in Romana Ecclesia etiamnum vocabula, sed longe distat effectus’. The reference is to Lactantius’s *Divinae Institutiones IV: De vera sapientia et religione*, 30, 13: ‘Sed tamen quia singuli quique coetus haereticorum se potissimum Christianos et suam esse catholicam ecclesiam putant, sciendum est illam esse veram, in qua est confessio et paenitentia, quae peccata et vulnera, quibus subiecta est imbecillitas carnis, salubriter curat’. From the auction catalogue of his books (see above, n. 24, p. 64, nr. 367), it appears that Van Buchel owned the *Divinae Institutiones* edition that had appeared in Antwerp (Johann Gymnich) in 1539.

⁴⁹ *Iter Italicum*, 115: ‘[...] curia Romana, in quam verae iam harpiae, ut Alphonsus rex dicere solitus, omnes convolarunt allectae nefandis pontificum moribus et scelerum missa licentia. Unde hic versus: ‘Omnia cum liceant non licet esse pium’. Van Buchel may have been familiar with the sayings of Alfonso of Aragon through the book on this king by Panormita (Antonio Beccadelli), *De dictis et factis Alphonsi regis*

by the magnificence of the villa and gardens that Pope Sixtus V had built when he was still a cardinal, more or less on the place of the gardens of Maecenas on the Esquiline hill:⁵⁰ ‘But if there are persons who for themselves approve of this ostentation of the popes, they should read what Cyprian wrote against Novatianus about the simplicity of prelates. Together with me, they would not just disapprove, but utterly condemn the arrogance of all our pontiffs, whose lifestyle is closer to that of a king, yes indeed a tyrant, than that of a true pope’.⁵¹

Van Buchel’s experience of the Church in Rome explains his reaction to the inscription on Hosius’s tomb and puts the memory of the late cardinal in a totally different light. He may indeed have been an honorable defender of the Catholic cause, but in Van Buchel’s view he was basically a tragic figure who fought for ideals that had long been corrupted. Evidently, the framework of learned books, contemplative virtues and eulogizing words was not resistant against Van Buchel’s knowledge of the early church fathers and his experience of the present state of the Church.

Pondering on Hosius’s tomb monument, Van Buchel went through the same process as when he observed the tomb of Pope Innocent VIII. He did not accept at face value the image of the deceased that the tomb monument presented to him. He stepped outside the framework which should have confined his thoughts, and crossed the borders of the intended meaning. Thus, he left the field of contemplative thoughts

Aragonum et Neapolis libri quattuor, I, 8. Van Buchel acknowledges Battista Mantovano in the margin of his text (not included in Lanciani’s edition). Although one finds the words ‘*Omnia cum liceant non licet esse pium*’ often quoted, I have as yet not been able to trace it in Mantovano’s work. According to Van Buchel’s list of books he owned (Hs 7 E 12, see above, n. 22, fol. 14r), he possessed Mantovano’s *Contra poetas impudice loquentibus*, *Panegyricum carmen in Rob. Severinatum*, *Carmina de sanctis* and *De bello Veneto*.

⁵⁰ On this villa, see Coffin D.R., *The Villa in the Life of Renaissance Rome* (Princeton: 1979) 365–368, and idem, *Gardens and gardening in papal Rome* (Princeton: 1991) 97–98 and esp. 142–144.

⁵¹ *Iter Italicum*, 102: ‘Verum siqui sibi hac pontificiorum pompa plaudunt, Cyprianum adversus Novatianum [Lanciani wrongly has ‘Nonatianum’] scribentem de simplicitate praelatorum legissent, mecum non tam improbarent quam prorsus damnarent omnium nostrorum antistitum fastum, regiae vitae imo tyrannide quam pontificiae verae proximiorem’. The letter referred to is no longer attributed to Cyprian. It is included as a letter by an unknown author *Ad Novatianum in Novatiani opera quae supersunt...*, in *Corpus Christianorum, series Latina*, vol. IV, ed. by G.F. Diercks (Turnhout: 1972) 129–152. Curiously, however, the author of this letter is not writing about pomp and wealth.

that were to be triggered by the virtuous example of the dead, and realized that he had entered the realm of propaganda for the Catholic Church. This propaganda was, of course, from the very beginning on meant to sway the meditative thoughts and contemplative musings of the observers, but only on an unconscious level. This may have worked in many cases, but as so often with propaganda, once it was discovered, it backfired. Van Buchel's thoughts can certainly not be classified as the kind of considerations that were intended, foreseen or approved of. To make matters worse, he had similar experiences elsewhere in Rome, when he studied papal inscriptions and paintings. Stepping outside the intended boundaries with the help of his vast literary and historical knowledge, he repeatedly discovered that he was being maneuvered and manipulated. In the heart of the Vatican Palace, in the grand Sala Regia, this even led to an outburst against 'these papal parasites'.⁵²

The propaganda that Van Buchel noticed in Rome was not in the first place meant to convince or convert Protestants or other non-Catholics. It was primarily intended – as propaganda often is – to confirm and further stimulate those who are already convinced. When Van Buchel visited Rome he was still a Catholic, but apparently the propaganda had the opposite effect on him. Far from confirming him in his religious convictions, it irritated and annoyed him. For some time to come he would remain a Catholic, but three or four years after his return to Utrecht he became a member of the Protestant Church.⁵³ It has been claimed that this conversion to Protestantism was not a direct consequence of his visit to Rome and that other, more important factors were at stake.⁵⁴ Even though this is undoubtedly true, it is also a fact that Van Buchel's experiences in Rome did not contribute to fostering his Catholic convictions. The propagandistic overtones he sensed had a counterproductive effect on him. The tomb monuments

⁵² On Van Buchel and the paintings in the Sala Regia, see de Jong J.L., "Papal History and Historical Invenzione. Vasari's Frescoes in the Sala Regia", in Jacks P.J. (ed.), *Vasari's Florence: Artists and Literati at the Medicean Court* (Cambridge UK.: 1998) 220–237, and idem, "The Painted Decoration of the Sala Regia" 153–168. For another instance of Van Buchel's sarcastic commentary on papal propaganda, see my review of Ullrich U.B., *Der Kaiser im "giardino dell'Impero". Zur Rezeption Karls V in italienischen Bildprogrammen des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: 2006), *Journal für Kunstgeschichte* 12/2 (2008) 125.

⁵³ This happened around the time he married Claesje van Voorst, in 1593. See Pollmann, *Religious Choice*, 76ff.

⁵⁴ Pollmann, *Religious Choice*, esp. 41–48 and 76–103.

of Pope Innocent VIII, which proclaims integrity and piety, and of Cardinal Hosius, the staunch defender of the true Faith that can only be found within the Catholic Church, did set Van Buchel thinking and meditating on matters of belief and religion. It is an ironic conclusion, however, especially in the case of Cardinal Hosius's tomb, that in the end this thinking and meditating contributed to driving Van Buchel out of the framework of the Catholic Church and into the orbit of Protestantism.

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MIRACLE BOOKS AND RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE IN THE SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS. THE CASE OF OUR LADY OF HANSWIJK IN MECHELEN

Maarten Delbeke

Introduction

The authority of the word over architecture has been expressed most forcefully in Victor Hugo's novel *Notre Dame de Paris*. The famous chapter "Ceci tuera cela", "This will be the death of that", explains how the advent of the printed book killed architecture. In a virtuoso history of architecture Hugo narrates how architecture first emerged in order to express the memories and ideas of human society; architecture is monumental in origin. With the invention of printing in the fifteenth century and the ever-increasing popularity of the book, mankind chose to express itself through the word. Printing became the monumental art of choice and architecture died, withering away in an endless imitation of the now meaningless forms of antiquity also known as the Renaissance. Ever since, the monument has been constructed with books, not stones. Hugo continues to express the hope that architecture will re-emerge one day. Yet even then the book will remain her mistress and building will stand under the tutelage of the word.¹

Hugo's history of architecture's demise and its possible rebirth spans the period from the early Renaissance to the nineteenth century. The narrative of *Notre Dame de Paris* is set in the fifteenth century and Hugo first published the book in 1831, adding the chapter deplored the death of architecture to the definitive edition of the next year. In the course of these four centuries the word takes over from architecture and buildings become, in Hugo's words, works of art like any other,

¹ On "Ceci tuera cela", see Mallion J., *Victor Hugo et l'art architectural* (Paris: 1962) 553–635; Levine N., "The book and the building: Hugo's theory of architecture and Labrouste's Bibliothèque Ste-Geneviève", in Middleton R. (ed.), *The Beaux-Arts and nineteenth-century French architecture* (London: 1982) 138–173; Brière C., *Victor Hugo et le roman architectural* (Paris: 2007) 441–446.

produced in academies and described in treatises, no longer the pre-eminent expression of human thought. This history of architecture can be contested, as Emile Mâle famously did,² but regardless of historical accuracy Hugo makes a point that is hard to dismiss: when architecture primarily concerns the expression and embodiment of meanings because it originated as a monument (rather than as shelter), it stands to lose its defining purpose as soon as other media can lay claim to those same meanings. Conversely, when the book becomes the locus of communication, the monumental status of buildings is challenged. After all, their meaning becomes dispersed in a new literary space with little relation to the actual building.³

Victor Hugo's view of architecture did not exist in isolation. Probably filtered through the book *Du génie de l'architecture* (1822) by Jacques-Antoine Coussin, Hugo adopted ideas voiced in the letters that the Parisian architect Jean-Louis Viel de Saint-Maux published individually over the course of the 1780s and then collected in 1787 as the *Lettres sur l'Architecture des Anciens et celle des Modernes*.⁴ According to Viel, architecture had originated as the communal language of primitive people, the public repository of their collective memory, and the "book" by which such communities perpetuated knowledge. This knowledge concerned the realm of the sacred; the first building was an altar, not a hut.⁵ This view on the origin of architecture derived from the budding field of cultural history, which aimed to describe primitive civilization and its religious practices and beliefs. The stone fields of Normandy and the structures of Stonehenge were seen as proof that sacred rocks and primitive constructions stood at the center of early civilization. The inference that architecture originated from these altars, drawn by Viel and other eighteenth-century authors, was further developed in the first decades of the nineteenth century, especially in histories of religion.⁶ By the time Hugo wrote his death sentence of

² See Mallion, *Victor Hugo* 603.

³ See Wittman R., *Architecture, Print Culture and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century France* (London: 2007) 1–16.

⁴ Wittman, *Architecture* 2 points out Hugo's debt to Viel. Mallion, *Victor Hugo* 547–550 suggests that Hugo knew the work of Coussin (whom he refers to as Coussin) and Coussin refers to Viel, see Garric J.-Ph., *Recueils d'Italie. Les modèles italiens dans les livres d'architecture français* (Sprimont: 2004) 190.

⁵ Wittman R., "The Hut and the Altar: Architectural Origins and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century France", *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 36 (2007) 240.

⁶ On Hugo's sources, see Mallion, *Victor Hugo* 545–552. On contemporary debates about the origins of monumental architecture in primitive religion, see Saisselin R.,

architecture, the idea of architecture as the first expression of primitive religiosity had become well established.

Hugo stressed that the thoughts and ideas embodied in architecture before the advent of the printing press were not necessarily religious and concerned society as a whole.⁷ Or more accurately, the many religious buildings Hugo mentions, starting with the Temple of Solomon and culminating with the Notre Dame, are treated first and foremost as civic monuments. Still, Hugo's view of architecture invites the question of whether the advent of the printing press affected the way religious buildings were understood and valued. Did books desiccate church buildings? And, if so, does the printed matter available to us today contain residues of some earlier and perhaps diminished meanings of sacred architecture? Did the emergence of printed books on churches annihilate or rather 'prove' the mediality of religious architecture, and retrieve histories and practices from an older past that were projected back onto the waiting stones?

These questions seem particularly pertinent to late sixteenth and seventeenth century. Cesare Baronio's *Annales Ecclesiastici* (1596–1607) and contemporary Christian archaeology inspired a new and widely distributed Catholic historiography aimed at proving the provenance of liturgical rites, the existence of saints and the continuity of their cult. Because rites are accommodated in spaces and buildings that not only house the present cult but also carry the traces of older devotional and liturgical practices, the writing of history in the service of liturgy became intimately linked with the recording of buildings.⁸ This connection between the historical investigation of a place and the writing of church history is most visible in the impressive amount of local

"Painting, writing and primitive purity: from expression to sign in eighteenth-century France", *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 217 (1983) 316–332; Michel C., "L'argument des origines dans les théories des arts en France à l'époque des lumières", in Grell C. – Michel C. (eds.), *Primitivisme et mythes des origines dans la France des Lumières, 1680–1820* (Paris: 1989) 41–43.

⁷ Hugo emphasizes that every civilization begins with theocracy and ends with democracy, and that, accordingly, theocracy and democracy will write stone books of a fundamentally different character. This evolution is exemplified in the transition from romanesque to gothic architecture.

⁸ On the emergence of this practice, see for instance Maio R. de (ed.), *Baronio e l'arte: atti del Convegno internazionale di Studi, Sora, 10–13 ottobre 1984* (Sora: 1985); Agosti B., *Collezionismo e archeologia cristiana nel Seicento. Federico Borromeo e il Medioevo artistico tra Roma e Milano* (Milan: 1996); Herklotz I., "Christliche und klassische Archäologie im sechzehnten Jahrhundert: Skizzen zur Genese einer Wissenschaft", in Kuhn D. (ed.), *Die Gegenwart des Altertums* (Heidelberg: 2001) 291–307.

church history produced in the course of the seventeenth century. Local church historians – not too distant forefathers of the enlightened historians who would inspire Victor Hugo – typically combined a wide range of genres, such as collective lives of saints, catalogues of bishops, collections of municipal privileges, histories of illustrious families and people, and the genre of the *descriptio urbis*, in order to produce coherent narratives about places of worship.⁹

In the Southern Netherlands the religious wars provided a strong impetus for this genre of historiography. The recatholisation of the territory was supported by the restoration or rebuilding of churches and the installation of sacred images, activities explained and justified in an important body of sacred histories and topographies, and divulged by means of images printed on sheets and pennants.¹⁰ Miracle books provided historical accounts of miraculous images and their cult in order to justify their existence and veneration. In certain cases, the production of these booklets was sponsored by the Habsburg rulers who especially reinvigorated Marian devotions to forge a sense of national unity after the onslaught of the religious wars.¹¹ Renowned humanists like Justus Lipsius and his pupil Erycius Puteanus lent their pens to this endeavor, which caused considerable controversy.¹² Much of this literature, however, was produced by local clerics or clerks, whose penchant for the archive was only matched by their devotion to the particular saint or shrine whose history they set out to write.

These booklets are much less concerned with the general development of civilization and its religious customs than were the ethnographic histories that inspired Victor Hugo. In fact, devout historiography aimed to define the particularities of a cult rather than its similari-

⁹ Ditchfield S., *Liturgy, sanctity and history in Tridentine Italy: Pietro Maria Campi and the preservation of the particular* (Cambridge: 2005) 328–351.

¹⁰ Thijs A.K.L., *Antwerpen, Internationaal uitgeverscentrum van devotieprenten, 17de–18de eeuw* (Louvain: 1993); idem, “Over bedevaarten in Vlaanderen: van stichtelijke propaganda naar wetenschappelijke interesse”, *Volkskunde. Tijdschrift voor de studie van het volksleven* 97, 3 (1996) 272–349; Bowen K.L., *Marian Pilgrimage sites in Brabant. A Bibliography of Books printed between 1600–1850* (Louvain: 2008).

¹¹ See Delfosse A., *La “Protectrice du País-Bas”. Stratégies politiques et figures de la Vierge dans les Pays-Bas espagnols* (Turnhout: 2009).

¹² See Landtsheer J. de, “Justus Lipsius’s treatises on the Holy Virgin”, in Gelderblom A. – De Jong J.L. – Vaeck M. van (eds.), *The Low Countries as a Crossroads of Religious Beliefs*, Intersections. Yearbook for early modern studies 3 (Leiden: 2004) 65–88. On Lipsius intimate relation with the cult in Halle, see Bass M., “Justus Lipsius and his silver pen”, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 70 (2007) 157–194.

ties with other comparable practices. It was attempting, after all, to prove the legitimacy of a specific devotion tied to a unique image or place. Still, there are traces of more general considerations underpinning these particular histories. As might be expected, many booklets adopted Tridentine notions of image-worship to dismiss Protestant accusations of idolatry.¹³ Another perhaps more surprising recurrent theme concerns the origins of the practice of worshipping images found in trees, the largest class amongst the scores of miraculous statues venerated throughout the Southern Netherlands. Already in 1632, Augustinus Wichmans argued in his *Brabantia Mariana* that this form of image worship had originated in the pagan cult of trees and that the Christian adoption of these older customs contributed greatly to the establishment of true religiosity in the Southern Netherlands.¹⁴ In other words, rather than being an anomaly, the transformation of the tree cult into the veneration of miraculous statues was an important proof of the historical emergence of Christianity.

Wichmans' view was picked up in several local church histories, where it was connected to the theme that concerns us here, the relation of the image to the altar, chapel or church erected in its honor. A history of the Our Lady of Good Will in Duffel near Mechelen, published in 1717, went so far as to consider the elm where the image was found as the original model for the chapel and altar built on the site of the tree.¹⁵ This assertion served to cast the chapel as a legitimate

¹³ On this topic, see for instance Lecerle F., "L'obscénité de l'idole: à propos du 'Trattato della pittura e scultura, uso et abuso loro' de G.D. Ottonelli et Pietro da Cortona (1652)", in Dekoninck R. – Watthee-Delmotte M. (eds.), *L'idole dans l'imaginaire occidental* (Paris: 2005) 155–165, esp. 157–159. A detailed case-study of the discourse on sacred images in a miracle book can be found in Dekoninck R., "Défense et illustration du culte de Notre-Dame de Foy. L'Abrégé de l'*histoire de Notre-Dame de Foy* de Louis Lipsin (1734)", *Annales de la société archéologique de Namur* 83 (2009) 205–213.

¹⁴ Wichmans Augustinus, *Brabantia mariana tripartita* (Antwerp, Ioannes Cnobbaert: 1632) bk. 1, ch. 15, 210–223. On ecclesiastical attitudes towards tree worship in the seventeenth century, see Rooijakkens G., "Cult circuits in the Southern Netherlands. Mediators between Heaven and Earth", in Holsbeke M. (ed.), *The Object as Mediator. On the Transcendental Meaning of Art in Traditional Cultures* (Antwerp: 1996) 23–29.

¹⁵ Mattens Norbertus, *Onse L. Vrouwe van Duffel ofte van goeden wil. Dat is de wonderheden van Maria, soo in het doen vinden ende hervinden van haer miraculeus beeldt als int gunstig uytstorten van wonderbare genesingen tot Duffel* (Antwerp, weduwe Jacobs: 1717) 10: 'Dit dient oock in boomten aenmerckt te sijn, dat het gemaecte Kercken schynen. Den stam is als den Autaer, en de tacken hun rontom van boven uytspreyende maken den theroon en het welfsel'.

shrine for the image. After all, in keeping with the misgivings about tree worship widely held by ecclesiastical authorities, building the chapel had destroyed the original tree. The written account, on the other hand, established a firm and indeed incontrovertible link between the image and the chapel: the chapel derived its existence and its status as a sacred place entirely from the statue and its original location. In other words, with the first model of the sanctuary eradicated or vanished, the printed word reconnected the present building with its sacred origins. This dynamic occurs frequently in the miracle books of the period. An analysis of one particular example may elucidate how such reconnection could be achieved, how it reflected upon the building, and how it persisted throughout time.¹⁶

Petrus Croon's History of Our Lady of Hanswijk

In 1670 Petrus Croon published his *Historie van Onse Lieve Vrauwe van Hanswyck Door haer audt ende Mirakuleus Beeldt Eertydts buyten nu binnen Mechelen*.¹⁷ The miraculous Virgin Mary in question had been venerated probably as early as the tenth century in the hamlet of Hanswijk near Mechelen in Belgium. In order to safeguard the image from the troops that periodically marauded the territory during the Dutch Revolt and eventually destroyed the church where it was housed, in 1578 the image was brought inside the city walls of Mechelen and housed in a modest existing church. Around 1640, the image was crowned with an elaborate gilded baldachin [Fig. 1]. Soon, the old church proved too small and inappropriate for the image, and despite a notable lack of funds, in 1663 the prior Willem or Guglielmus Cool decided to erect a new building. The commission was assigned to Lucas Fayd'herbe, who between 1619–1640 trained as a sculptor in the workshop of Rubens, and became active as an architect from the late 1650s onwards. The first stone of the new church was laid on 10 May

¹⁶ The literature listed in note 10 are important steps towards a bibliography and analysis of early modern miracle books published in the Southern Netherlands, but comprehensive research of this literature has not yet been undertaken. This essay is based on a sample of miracle books taken from Bowen, *Marian Pilgrimage*, and the catalogue of the Van Hulthem collection of the Royal Library in Brussels.

¹⁷ Croon Petrus, *Historie van Onse Lieve Vrauwe van Hanswyck door haer audt ende Mirakuleus Beeldt eertydts buyten nu binnen Mechelen Besonderlijck Vermaert* (Mechelen, Gysbrecht Lints: 1670).



Fig. 1. F. Bouttats, *Miraculous Image of Our Lady of Hanswijk*. Engraving from: Petrus Croon, *Historie van Onse Lieve Vrauwe van Hanswyck door haer audt ende Mirakuleus Beeldt eertydts buyten nu binnen Mechelen Besonderlijck Vermaert* (Mechelen, Gysbrecht Lints: 1670) n.p. (Brussels, Royal Library).

1663 by archbishop Jacob Cruesen, but construction proceeded very slowly, so that the image was transferred there only in 1678, nine years before the church was finally consecrated. By then, the facade was still not finished [Fig. 2].¹⁸

There is little reason to doubt that Croon's *Historie* appeared in conjunction with the construction of the new church of Our Lady of Hanswijk, as it is exceptionally well illustrated with engravings after Fayd'herbe's designs produced by F. Boultats [Figs. 3 and 4]. At the same time, Croon's account of the image of Hanswijk is typical of the genre of miracle books in that it traces the origin of the place where the statue was first venerated, describes the earliest devotion to the image, and explains how it arrived in Hanswijk and performed the miraculous deeds that soon generated considerable fame.¹⁹ If these features are generic, Croon also carefully introduces themes that characterize this particular image. These themes also concern the meaning and sacrality of the church building.

A first theme is already announced in the title of his account, about the 'old and miraculous image formerly without and now within Mechelen': originally, Our Lady of Hanswijk was venerated outside of the city, but she was moved to take up her role as the protectress of Mechelen. In other words, the relation of the image to the city and the manifestation of the image's agency are dynamic, characterized by movement, and therefore not without complications. Croon describes how in 1272 a procession of Hanswijk peasants wanted to carry the image into Mechelen to assist the city in battling the plague. Fearing the throng of worshippers, the citizens closed the city gate. The people of Hanswijk then started to pray the *Ave Maria Stella Maris*. Upon uttering the verse *Monstra te essem Matrem* ('Show thyself to be our Mother') the city gate sprung open and the image entered the city. This miracle established the model for the annual procession of Our Lady of Hanswijk, which thus commemorates that in 1272 the Virgin forcefully adopted the citizens of Mechelen as her children.²⁰ Three centuries later this heavenly protection stood the people of Mechelen in good stead. Fleeing the Protestants, the image (described

¹⁸ For the building history of the church, see Jonge K. De, a.o., "Lucas Fayd'Herbe als architect", in De Nijn H. – Vlieghe H. – Devisscher H. (eds.), *Lucas Fayd'Herbe 1617–1697. Mechels Beeldhouwer & Architect* (n.p.: [1997]) 91–97.

¹⁹ Croon, *Historie* 10–11.

²⁰ Croon, *Historie* 73–75.



Fig. 2. Lucas Fayd'herbe, Our Lady of Hanswijk, street view, Mechelen, started 1663 (KIK-IRPA, Brussels).



Fig. 3. F. Bouttats, facade of Our Lady of Hanswijk. Engraving in Petrus Croon, *Historie van Onse Lieve Vrauwe van Hanswyck door haer audt ende Mirakuleus Beeldt eertydts buyten nu binnen Mechelen Besonderlijck Vermaert* (Mechelen, Gysbrecht Lints: 1670) 132 (Brussels, Royal Library).

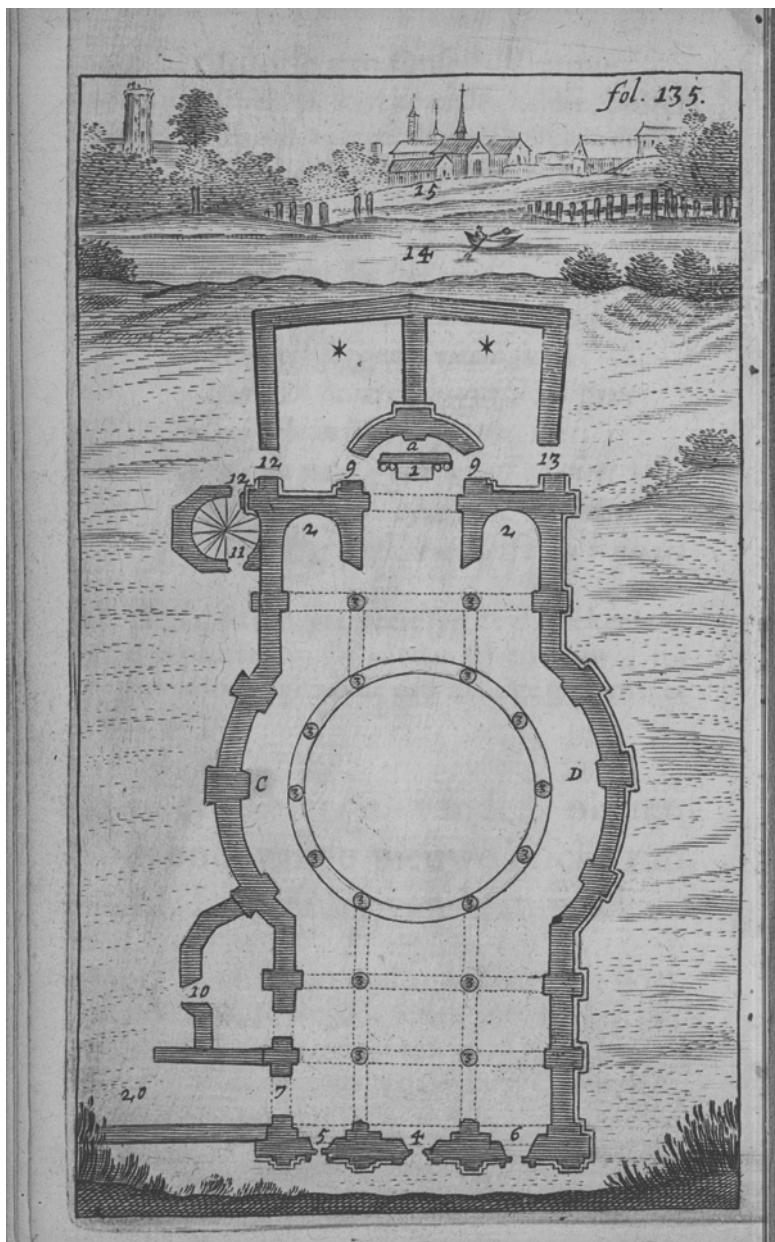


Fig. 4. F. Bouttats, plan of Our Lady of Hanswijk. Engraving in Petrus Croon, *Historie van Onse Lieve Vrauwe van Hanswyck door haer audt ende Mirakuleus Beeldt eertydts buyten nu binnen Mechelen Besonderlijck Vermaert* (Mechelen, Gysbrecht Lints: 1670) 135 (Brussels, Royal Library).

as a ‘treasure’)²¹ finally entered the city for good, and after receiving shelter in Mechelen, Croon writes, the image protected the city better than any rampart.²²

Croon compares the image with the city’s fortifications when he describes the outpouring of gifts that greeted the plan to build a new church in 1663, a display of civic zeal comparable only to the ardor the citizens showed when threatened by an advancing enemy. This close identification of civic identity, devotion and generosity belongs to the second theme that is central to Croon’s history, the interconnection of the statue’s spiritual agency with its material surroundings. Croon introduces this theme when he describes the image. He often studied the image, and

remarked that it [has] a very sweet, smooth, shiny and friendly-blushing face; in which, even if it carries no trace of the sculptor’s art, from the Heavens a hidden power has been bestowed; that touches us internally, and [we] feel an exceptional sweetness and comfort of the heart in the presence of this image. It is impossible to behold without experiencing internally a particular attraction and love for heavenly matters.²³

The image inspires exceptional generosity, Croon continues, and he describes in detail the jewelry, dresses and finally the precious throne that were offered to Our Lady of Hanswijk.²⁴ This theme of the material gifts spurred by the statue’s spiritual agency pervades Croon’s *Historie*. It embodies an antithesis: the artless image, carrying ‘no trace of the sculptor’s art’, receives the most priceless artifacts as a thanksgiving and a token of honor. These gifts, in turn, are spiritualized, not only because the venerators of the image gain in devotional capital by giving away their worldly goods,²⁵ but also because the image animates

²¹ Croon, *Historie* 42.

²² Croon, *Historie* 119–120: ‘Kloeck! vrienden gy versterckt / Voorwaer uw Stadt ten besten / Gy maecktse stercker soo, / Dan met vier-dobbel vesten’.

²³ Croon, *Historie* 16: ‘Ick hebbe menighmael neerstighlijck ende met goede stade dit H. Beeldt bekeken, ende bemerckt dat het een seer soete, gladde, blinckende ende vrindelyck-blosende tronie is: in de welcke, al en issen de wtterste konst vanden Beelt-hauwer niet in te vinden, nochtans vanden Hemel een verborgen kracht in-gestort is; waer door wy inwendighlyck beroert worden, ende gevoelen een ongewoone soetig-heydt ende vertroostinge des herten, inde tegen-woordigheydt van dit H. ende wonderlyck Beeldt. Het is on-mogelyck te aenschauwen, ende geenen besonderen treck ende liefde tot hemelsche saecken van binnen gewaer te worden’.

²⁴ Croon, *Historie* 16–19.

²⁵ Croon, *Historie* 93–98, with on 93–94: ‘Het schynt datse van wedersyden om prys geven: MARIA troost en bystandt, de Borgerye schoone cyraeden’.

the material ornaments that it receives. Croon is very clear on this point, describing the image as the soul of the churches it inhabits.²⁶ When the image is removed from its very first church in Hanswijk outside Mechelen, Croon relates how the building soon decayed and eventually disappeared, comparing the building with a corpse bereft of its soul.²⁷ Croon also makes it clear that within the first church inside Mechelen to house the statue, the sphere of the image did not extend beyond the altar.²⁸ The interior of the church was dark and poor, and was only decorated on Pentecost, when Our Lady of Hanswijk was installed in the middle of the nave, three days before the annual procession.

Croon's history of the miraculous image establishes the topology of the new building. When Croon describes its building history, he stresses that there was no money available to match the pious intentions of the citizens but, as already mentioned, the project was greeted with unprecedented generosity. Croon casts the contributions of the citizens and especially the women of Mechelen towards the construction of the church in exactly the same terms as their offering of the rich vestments, jewelry and crown originally bestowed upon the image.

Rarely has been seen / a work so adored / that most of / the women sacrifice / and rip from their body / their precious jewelry / otherwise their greatest pleasure.

Croon concludes:

it is true / it happened once before / as we can read / in the book Exodus / of Moses.

²⁶ Croon, *Historie* 19; 22–23.

²⁷ Croon, *Historie* 44: 'Al slyt den mensch door ouderdom, / Al wort syn lyff allens-kens krom: // Het lichaem blyft nog eensints fris / Soo langh de siel daer binnen is; // Maer als de siel het lichaem laet, / Dan ist oock dat het vleesch vergaet: // 'T bederft, t' verrot, t'verdwijnt in niet / Soo dat m'er geen schyn van siet. // De kerck van Hanswyck buyten Stadt, / Al was die oudt, al sletse wat, // Sy bleeff nog staen, soo langh daer in / t' Beeldt stont van onse Coningin; // Maer als dat Beeldt die kerck verliet / Verdweense g'heel, en quam tot niet, // Dan wast dat sy te neder viel / MARIA was gelijck de siel.'

²⁸ Croon, *Historie* 91–92: 'Den Autaer, waer boven in eenen Vergulden Throon van haut (als voren geseyt is) het mirakuleus Beeldt is rustende, staet in sulcker voegen, dat men daer ront en om kan gaen (het welck Volck gemeenlijck, naer oude gewoonte, drymaels doet ter eeren vande Alder heylighste Maghet) ende is ook van haut gemaect, sonder eenigen besonderen kost of konst; [...] Emmers den stant ende staet vande ganssche kercke en vertoont niets anderes dan Oudheydt ende Armoede'.

Croon here alludes to the episode of the Golden Calf and casts the new church as a counter-example, an instance of righteous piety expressed by a similar sacrifice of jewelry.²⁹

The comparison is in itself a remarkable conflation of image worship and temple building, two related yet clearly distinct forms of veneration, the first concerning the effigy of the deity, the second its shrine or tabernacle.³⁰ If Croon does not go so far as to liken the church to the image, the relation of the statue to the building is the same as to its vestments and jewels, where the sumptuous ornaments are the visible traces of the spiritual bond between worshippers and image. This relation also lays out implicitly the dynamic between the image and the church. Croon mentions the centering of the image in the old church before the annual procession, a practice that obviously continued in the new church.³¹ In fact, it is still possible to witness this ritual today: on the days before the annual procession of Our Lady of Hanswijk in May, the image is moved from the main altar to the center of the rotunda under the dome and richly decorated with garlands and flowers [Fig. 5]. The ambulatory allows the faithful to circulate

²⁹ Croon, *Historie* 129–132: ‘En saude desen Bauw / Niet voorts-gaen? als de Vrauen / Juweelen vanden hals / Ver-eeren, om te bauwen?// En sau dit heyligh werck / Niet voorts-gaen? dat soo seer / Bemint wort, als ’t cyraedt / Van Vrauen, en noch meer?// Als Vrauen selff daer toe / Soo heevigh syn gedreven, / Dat sy het lieffste deel / Van al hun schatten geven?// Want niet en heeft een Vrau / Soo lieff, als haer cyraedt, / En niet, dat sy soo noo, / En tegen ’therde laet. // ’t En is soo nieuwe niet, / Aen dier-gelyckie kercken / De mans ter eeren Godts / Te sien gewilligh wercken: // Wy hebben meer gesien / Vereeren kalck en steen, / En, tot de Moeder Godts, / Den iver al-gemeen. // Maer selden is gesien / Een werck so seer behagen, / Dat daerom meesten-deel / De Vrauen op gaen dragen // En rucken van het lyff / Hun kostelijck cyraedt: / Waer in toch al ’t vermaeck’.

³⁰ It should be noted, however, that the notion of ‘idol’ was sometimes used in connection with buildings, as when Pius IV installed the inscription ‘Quod fuit idolum, nunc est templum Virginis. Auctor est pater ipse Pius. Daemones aufugite’ to commemorate the transformation of Diocletian’s baths into Santa Maria degli Angeli, see Herklotz I., “Basilica e edificio a pianta centrale. Continuità ed esclusione nella storiografia architettonica all’epoca del Baronio”, in Gulia L. (ed.), *Baronio e le sue fonti. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi Sora 10–13 Ottobre 2007* (Sora: 2009) 551–578, with the quote on 568.

³¹ Croon, *Historie* 70–71: ‘Eerst wordt het Beeldt van de Moeder der Goddelijcker gratien des maen-dagh te voren, korts naer den noen, voor de Vesperen af-geset, ende in het midden van de kercke gestelt, ende aldaer op het kostelijckste verciert synde, wort de kerck ontsloten. Wanneer terstont bemerckt wort de teere lieffde vande Borgerye tot MARIA: de welcke sy alsdan besonderlijck, gewoone syn te ver eeran met alles watter schoons off selsaems te vinden is, soo van een aen-genaeme en welriekende bloemekens, als vroegh-rype vruchtiens der aerden’.



MALINES. — Intérieur de l'Église N. D. d'Hanswyck.

Fig. 5. Anonymous postcard, interior view of Our Lady of Hanswyk before the annual procession, undated (nineteenth century) (Ghent University, Central Library).

around the statue, while the dome becomes a tabernacle encapsulating the older throne.

This persistent custom suggests an intimate relation between the miraculous image and the unique design of the church. The ground plan consists of a circular ambulatory with a deep apse and a nave without a transept. The crowning dome of the ambulatory already rises above the building in its present shape, but as Croon's illustrations suggest, it was probably intended to carry a second order. The longitudinal plan with the rotunda not only generates a monumental shrine for the image when it stands in the middle of the church, but also guides its annual movement from the altar to the center. Contrary to the first church, where only the immediate surroundings of the statue were sanctified by the reciprocal generosity between the Virgin and the people of Mechelen, the new church in its entirety is animated by the history and agency of the image.

Nonetheless, nowhere does Croon hint that this devotional practice dictated Fayd'herbe's architecture. Indeed, Croon's account leaves little if any space for the formal specificity of the architecture; the building is a prosthesis of the image. It is left to the reader to connect the shape of the building with Croon's history of its agency and veneration. Here, the thematic unity of his narrative plays a crucial role, as well as the set of illustrations. The narrative casts the church building as an extension of the miraculous statue it houses. Because the new church is part of the same history as the older churches and ornaments, it self-evidently becomes a container for the image, comparable to thrones, baldachins and aedicules, or even the statue's dress. The building is also particularly well suited to express the civic and religious function of the miraculous image, as a bulwark protecting the city, while drawing its inhabitants together in communal acts of generosity inspired by the statue's spiritual agency [Fig. 6]. The illustrations assist the reader in imagining how the new church guides the performance of ritual and underscores its symbolical meanings. For instance, the engraving of the facade in Croon's booklet connects the open main door with the center of the church, where the image is exposed before the procession takes it through the city. The inscription above the door, *Mostra te esse Matrem*, would have enforced this link as it refers to the events of 1272 when the image miraculously opened the city gates.³²

³² The inscription is not shown on the engraving, but Croon, *Historie* 75 stresses that it will figure prominently on the new facade.



Fig. 6. Lucas Fayd'herbe, Our Lady of Hanswijk, Mechelen, started 1663
(KIK-IRPA, Brussels).

The Decomposition of Hanswijk

Petrus Croon's devotional history construes the new church building as a sacred shrine. Its sacrality is produced by the miraculous image. Only because Croon authorizes the image to act as a spiritual agent, a soul, does the architecture of the building become charged with meaning. As his account makes clear, this 'sacralization' is made manifest each year, on the eve of the annual procession. Inside the church, Our Lady of Hanswijk reiterates her movement from periphery to center, to become the focus of the citizen's spiritual longings and transform the church into a magnificent tabernacle.

That Croon offers a particular reading of the building becomes clear when his narrative is compared with a subsequent history of Our Lady of Hanswijk. In 1738 a new miracle book was published by Petrus Siré, in honor of what was believed to be the 750th anniversary of the cult. If Siré uses much of Croon's historical material and often quotes his predecessor, he also dissolves the thematic unity of Croon's account. Whereas Croon's booklet is largely chronological, Siré divides his history into a first part concerning the image and its subsequent shrines and a second about the devotion of the image. As a result, Siré no longer describes the jewels, robes and throne as part of the image but separately, as historical evidence of the age-old veneration in which it was held.³³ The bond between the new building and the image is likewise dissolved. Siré does not mention the total disappearance of the old church outside the walls, crucial proof of the Virgin's animating powers.³⁴ The transformation of exterior decoration into interior ornament, so central to Croon's narrative, is nowhere mentioned in Siré. The statue is not an animated entity enlivening a shrine, church or city, but the representation of a higher and remote power. When describing the image, Siré elaborates upon the decrees of the Council of Trent with regard the veneration of images, to remind his reader that they

³³ This is mentioned explicitly by Siré after his description of the image, see Siré Petrus, *Hanswyck ender het wonderdadigh beeldt van de alder-heylichste Maget ende Moeder Godts Maria Eertys buyten, nu binnen Mechelen* (Dendermonde, Jacobus Ducaju: 1738) 27: 'Raeckende de kostelijcke Kleederen, Juweelend, ende ander Cieraet van dit H. Beeldt wordt gehandelt in het sesde Capittel van het tweede deel'. See, in fact, Siré, *Hanswyck* part 2, chapter 5, 170–198.

³⁴ Siré, *Hanswyck* 14–15 actually provides an illustration of the older church.

are but ‘shadows’ of the divine entities they represent, and he recalls the power of St. Peter’s shadow, which healed the ill (*Acts* 5:15).³⁵

This comparison is indicative of Siré’s frame of reference: the devotion in Hanswijk is the reenactment of scriptural precedent and is best explained in terms of sacred history. In shape, the church is still a tabernacle, but it is no longer seen as a living shrine for the venerable image. Now it is a reconstruction of the biblical architecture described in *Exodus* 35: Siré compares Fayd’herbe and his master mason Jan Claes, to Beseleël and Ooliab, the builders of the biblical Tabernacle. As if to reinvest the building with meaning, Our Lady of Hanswijk is placed in a long history of sacred architecture.³⁶ Similarly, when discussing the ornaments of Hanswijk, Siré lines up a plethora of authorities who justified riches and ornament in the church, including Giovanni Bona, one of the most important authors on Catholic liturgy of the seventeenth century. Ornament is no longer viewed as part of the system of exchange surrounding the image, but as the continuation of a venerable ecclesiastical tradition sanctioned by authority.³⁷ Another example of Siré’s endeavor to inscribe Hanswijk into authorized narratives is his inclusion of an invocation of the Virgin written by the pupils of the Mechelen public school in 1717. In this poem, the church is called a *peristilium*, with an explicit (and accurate) reference to book five of Vitruvius’ *De architectura libri decem*.³⁸ The passage in question does not deal with temples but describes the porticoes running around the *palaestra*.³⁹ Here, the vocabulary of classical architecture is used to interpret the key characteristic of the building in formal terms, rather than alluding to its devotional origins and use.

The most striking expression of the shift between the narratives of Croon and Siré can be found in the illustrations. The later publication boasts a set of new engravings [Figs. 7–9]. They were undoubtedly required because Croon’s illustrators must have worked from Fayd’herbe’s plans, whereas in Siré’s times the church was nearly finished, except for the facade. A comparison of the two series of

³⁵ Siré, *Hanswyck* 23.

³⁶ Siré, *Hanswyck* 106–107. Other examples pp. 45, 87, 101, 132–133.

³⁷ Siré, *Hanswyck* 170–173.

³⁸ Cited in Siré, *Hanswyck* 191, with the following footnote: ‘Peristylum, vel Peristilium, teste Vitruvio l.5.c.11 Aedificium est in circuitu columnis suffultum. Quale inter alia est Templum Hanswycanum’.

³⁹ Vitruvius, *Ten Books of Architecture*, ed. I. Rowland – T. Noble Howe (Cambridge: 1999) 73.



Fig. 7. I.B. Ioffroij, L.I. Fruijtiers, facade of Our Lady of Hanswijk. Engraving from: Petrus Siré, *Hanswyck ender het wonderdadigh beeldt van de alderheylichste Maget ende Moeder Godts Maria Eertys buyten, nu binnen Mechelen* (Dendermonde, Jacobus Ducaju: 1738) 122 (Brussels, Royal Library).

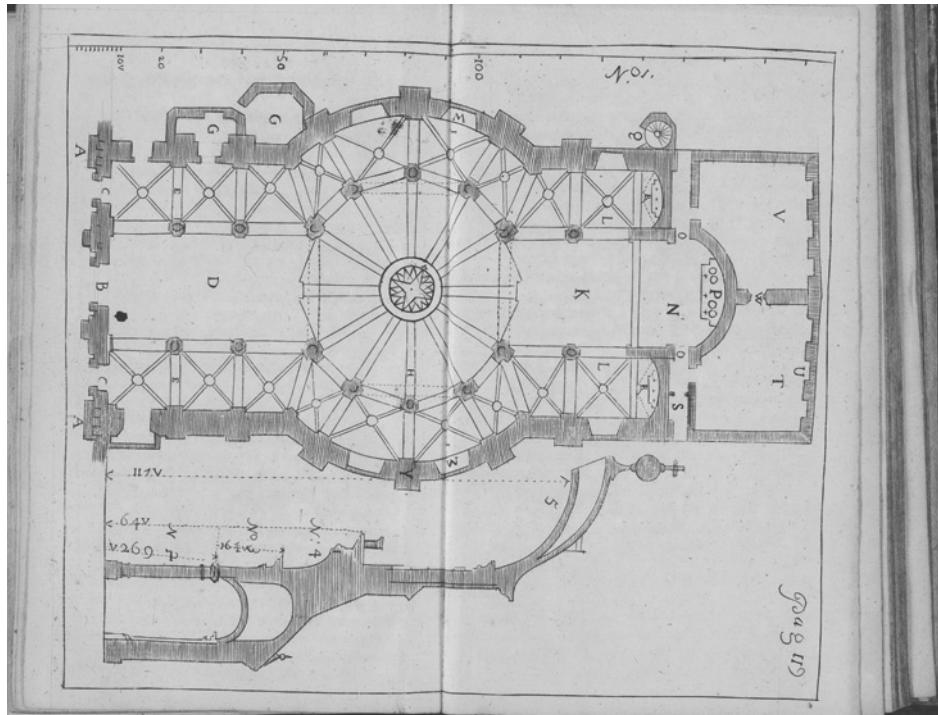


Fig. 8. I.B. Ioffroij, L.I. Fruijtiers, plan of Our Lady of Hanswijk. Engraving from: Petrus Siré, *Hanswyck ender het wonderdadigh beeldt van de alder-heylichste Maget ende Moeder Godts Maria Eertys buyten, nu binnen Mechelen* (Dendermonde, Jacobus Ducaju: 1738) 119 (Brussels, Royal Library).



Fig. 9. I.B. Ioffroij, L.I. Fruijtiers, interior view of Our Lady of Hanswijk. Engraving from: Petrus Siré, *Hanswyck ender het wonderdadigh beeldt van de alder-heylighste Maget ende Moeder Godts Maria Eertys buyten, nu binnen Mechelen* (Dendermonde, Jacobus Ducaju: 1738) 122 (Brussels, Royal Library).

engravings reveals how Siré's illustrations systematically diminish the presence of the miraculous image. In his view of the facade – no less virtual than Croon's – the doorways are represented as closed surfaces, and the ghost of an image visible in Croon has disappeared. Siré does add an interior view, but the rather than foregrounding the Virgin, it directs the viewer towards Fayd'herbe's busts of Saints Ambrose and Augustine.⁴⁰ A similar shift towards the artistic value of the church building can be observed in the plans. Included by Croon for the benefit of all 'precise minds',⁴¹ Siré addresses 'lovers of the art of building' and offers a detailed description with measurements of the building,

⁴⁰ This corresponds with the emphasis in Siré's description, see Siré, *Hanswyck* 118. Siré also includes an engraving of Fayd'herbe's relief of the birth and calvary of Christ, see *ibid.*

⁴¹ Croon, *Historie* 134.

and adds a section of the audacious dome to the drawing of the plan.⁴² In the absence of a strong historical narrative linking the image to its environment, architecture steps in and becomes worthy of attention in its own right.

Religious Architecture and the Authority of the Word

The case of Hanswijk is distinctive but certainly not unique. The important differences between the narratives Siré and Croon testify to a general tendency. In the course of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, miracle books turn their attention towards the theoretical questions involved in the veneration of images.⁴³ Similarly, early eighteenth-century miracle books adopt ever more rigorous standards of historical research. Probably due to intra-Catholic concerns about popular devotion spurred by the Jansenists controversy and the emergence of an increasingly critical readership,⁴⁴ this evolution results in the printed word and image seizing authority over the venerated image and neutralizing the potent agency at work in the church building.

A case discussed by Celeste Brusati suggests that the printed word and image were not the only media capable of reconfiguring the relation between a church building and the devotional objects it housed. Pieter Saenredam's perspectival interior views of churches operate a transformation of religious images as objects of veneration into 'artifacts of history' in the context of the early Dutch Republic and the Protestant Reformation. Here, the medium is painting and the instrument of transformation the perspectival representation of the

⁴² Siré, *Hanswyck* 119–122, with the quote 119: 'De Nieuwe Kercke van Hanswyck by de Minnaers der Bouw-konste met recht een voorwerp zynde van verwonderinge, hebbe ik tot hunne voldoeninge de by-gevoeghde Af-teeckeninge ende Beschryvinge van den *platten grondt* hier voorgestelt'. Possibly Siré's attention for the measures of the building serves to invoke biblical precedent, as Old Testament descriptions of sacred buildings contain elaborate sets of measurements.

⁴³ A similar shift can for instance be observed between Ph. Van Hoeswinckel's history of the Our Lady of Duffel published in 1667 (second edition) and the history of the same image published in 1717, quoted above in note 15.

⁴⁴ In the case discussed in Dekoninck, "Défense et illustration", the miraculous image is defended against enlightened thinkers. Again, more systematic research of miracle books is required to refine this general observation.

church interior.⁴⁵ If the popular Catholic historiography discussed in this essay was bent on proving the legitimacy and efficacy of image worship rather than neutralizing devotional artifacts, Saenredam's paintings work in a way that is strikingly analogous to the booklets presented here, especially if one thinks of Siré's illustrations. In both cases, architecture becomes disembodied and disconnected from the devotional or sacred objects it houses, effectively reducing the spiritual agency of those same objects.

This analogy points to two related yet distinct aspects of the exchange between the image and the building, which ultimately bear on the questions posed at the outset of this essay. Firstly, Siré, like Saenredam, uses architecture against the image out of concerns about idolatry. In Siré, the church building is a metonymy of the image devoid of all suspicion: it is non-figurative, but the amplitude and quality of its architecture still demonstrates how the Virgin's constituency consists of devout men and women. In order for this metonymy to circumscribe and control the sacrality of the image, the complex economy of material and spiritual exchange surrounding material gifts, so important to Croon, has to be removed from the statue's history.

Secondly, the history of the image exists by dint of the printed word. As buildings themselves rarely carry traces of divine agency, this history invests the church building with meaning.⁴⁶ In their shared endeavor to register accurately the devotion surrounding the miraculous statue, Croon and Siré record the same historical facts, but they produce different interpretations of the church building. Our Lady Church in Hanswijk is the result of communal labor or a collective urge for expression when the architecture is written as an extension of the sacred image, as in the account of Croon. In this narrative, architecture is a form of communal language and a repository of collective memory, not the object of an artistic practice with its own specialized audience, as in Siré.

Thus, paraphrasing Victor Hugo, the church building appears to stand under the tutelage of the miracle book. Only the book is capable

⁴⁵ Brusati C., "Reforming Idols and Viewing History in Pieter Saenredam's *Perspectives*", in Cole M.W. – Zorach R. (eds.), *The Idol in the Age of Art. Objects, Devotions and the Early Modern world* (Aldershot: 2009) 31–55.

⁴⁶ Important exceptions are churches designed or consecrated by divine agents, like the Our Lady Church in Laken, see for instance Wichmans, *Brabantia mariana* 311–314.

of producing or diminishing the meaning of architecture. More specifically, the shift between the accounts of Croon and Siré seems to reenact the death of meaningful and communal architecture at the hands of the art of architecture, a practice described in the books and engravings whose emergence was so deeply deplored by Victor Hugo and Viel before him. Still, the fact that both accounts subordinate the building to the miraculous image it houses distances Croon as much from Hugo as Siré. To Croon and Siré architecture was never alive in the first place; only the sacred image was. Hugo and other authors who situated the origin of architecture in the monument, celebrated buildings because their stones spoke before the era of the idol, as pure and primitive instances of sacrality, untainted by the mimetic urge of sophisticated man.⁴⁷ In their view, the kind of cult that Croon and Siré defended was an aberration, to which a new monumental architecture would help to put an end.

⁴⁷ An explicit statement of this view is Dulaure J.-A., *Des cultes qui ont précédé et amené l'idolâtrie ou l'adoration des figures humaines* (Paris: 1805).

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V. PICTORIAL ARTIFICE AND THE WORD

PRAYERFUL ARTIFICE: THE FINE STYLE AS MARIAN DEVOTION IN HIERONYMUS WIERIX'S MARIA OF CA. 1611

Walter S. Melion

Designed, engraved, and published by Hieronymus Wierix, with a dedication to Johannes Malderus, fifth bishop of Antwerp (1611–1633), the *Maria* series consists of a title-print and seven plates praising the Virgin as peerless intercessor and beseeching her merciful assistance [Figs. 1–8].¹ Wierix ingeniously combines verbal tags and visual images drawn from two popular laudatory prayers – the *Salve Regina* and the *Litania Loretana* – that doubled as prayers of supplication.²

¹ On the *Maria*, see Ruyven-Zeman Z. van – Leesberg M. (compilers), *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450–1700: The Wierix Family*, 10 vols. (Rotterdam: 2004) V 154–58, nos. 1053–60. On Malderus, author of learned treatises such as *De virtutibus theologicis et justitia et religione commentaria* (Antwerp, Balthasar and Jan Moretus: 1616) and *In Canticum Canticorum Salomonis commentarius* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus, widow of Jan Moretus, and Jan Meurs: 1628), as well as of pastoral works such as *Catholick onderwijs tot versterckinghe vanden crancen in 't gheeloove* (Antwerp, Widow and sons of Jan Moerentorf: 1613), see Branden J.J. van den – Frederiks J.G., *Biographisch woordenboek der Noord- en Zuidnederlandse letterkunde* (Amsterdam: 1888–1891) 490; and Piot C., “Malderus, Jean”, in *Biographie Nationale [...] de Belgique*, 44 vols. (Brussels: 1866–1986) XIII, cols. 223–226. Malderus also composed a series of theological meditations in thirty-one parts, the *Meditationes theologicae universae theologiae summam complectentes* (Antwerp: Balthasar Moretus, Ex officina Plantiniana Balthasaris Moreti: 1630).

² On the *Salve Regina*, see Henry H.T., “*Salve Regina*”, in Herbermann C.G. – Pace E.A. et alii (eds.), *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 18 vols. (New York: 1907–1958) XIII 409–410. On the *Litania Loretana*, see Santi A. de, *Le litanie lauretane* (Rome: 1897); idem, “*Litanie of Loreto*”, in Herbermann et alii (eds.), *The Catholic Encyclopedia* IX 287–290; Graef H., *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion*, 2 vols. (London – New York: 1965) I 232; Kammer C., *Die Lauretanische Litanei* (Innsbruck: 1960); Dürig W., *Die Lauretanische Litanei: Entstehung, Verfasser, Aufbau und mariologischer Inhalt* (St. Ottilien: 1990); and Pötzl W., *Loreto – Madonna und Heiliges Haus: die Wallfahrt auf dem Kobel. Ein Beitrag zur europäischen Kult- und Kulturgeschichte*, Beiträge zur Heimatkunde des Landkreises Augsburg 15 (Augsburg: 2000) 76. Petrus Canisius, S.J., defends both the *Salve Regina* and the *Litania Loretana*, in his Marian treatise of 1577: on the *Salve*, see *De Maria Virgine incomparabili, et Dei genitrice sacrosancta, libri quinque* (Ingolstadt, David Sartorius: 1577) 615–622; on the *Litanie*, in the context of a wide-ranging defense of Marian miracles, images, and pilgrimages, see ibidem 673–762. On Marian imagery specific to the cult of Loreto, see Grimaldi F., “*L'iconografia della Vergine lauretana nell'arte. I prototipi iconografici*”, in Grimaldi F. – Sordi K. (eds.), *L'iconografia della Vergine di Loreto nell'Arte* [exh.

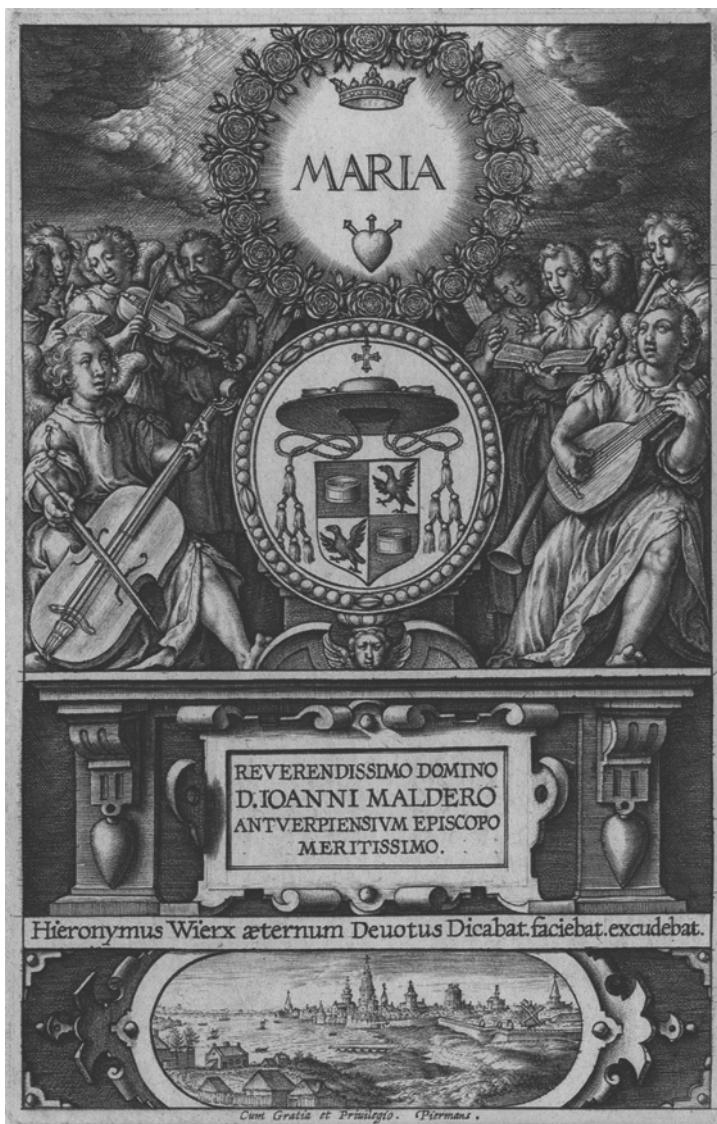


Fig. 1. Hieronymus Wierix, *Maria: Title with Dedication to Bishop Johannes Malderus* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Wierix: ca. 1611). Engraving, 13.5 × 8.6 cm. Seydel Collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.



Fig. 2. Hieronymus Wierix, *Salve Regina, Mater misericordiae.* Plate 1 from *Maria* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Wierix: ca. 1611). Engraving, 13.6 × 8.4 cm. Seydel Collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.



Fig. 3. Hieronymus Wierix, *Vita, dulcedo, & spes nostra salve*. Plate 2 from *Maria* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Wierix: ca. 1611). Engraving, 13.6 × 8.5 cm. Seydel Collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.



Fig. 4. Hieronymus Wierix, *Ad te clamamus exiles filij Euae*. Plate 3 from *Maria* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Wierix: ca. 1611). Engraving, 13.6 × 8.5 cm. Seydel Collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.



Fig. 5. Hieronymus Wierix, *Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes in hac lachrimarum valle.* Plate 4 from *Maria* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Wierix: ca. 1611). Engraving, 13.7 × 8.5 cm. Seydel Collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.



Fig. 6. Hieronymus Wierix, *Eia ergo advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordiae oculos ad nos converte.* Plate 5 from *Maria* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Wierix: ca. 1611). Engraving, 13.8 × 8.5 cm. Seydel Collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.



Fig. 7. Hieronymus Wierix, *Et Iesum benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende.* Plate 6 from *Maria* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Wierix: ca. 1611). Engraving, 13.7 × 8.5 cm. Seydel Collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.



Fig. 8. Hieronymus Wierix, *O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria*. Plate 7 from *Maria* (Antwerp, Hieronymus Wierix: ca. 1611). Engraving, 13.7 x 8.3 cm. Seydel Collection, Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Books Library, Emory University.

In addition, he interweaves clear allusions to the *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, implying that the Marian *tituli* constitute meditative subjects, that require no less attention than the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries of her life.³ My paper examines the series' text-image apparatus – its prayerful armature – that plays upon the votive properties of pictorial artifice, harnessing ejaculatory and supplicatory rubrics to exquisitely fashioned and minutely detailed Marian icons. At issue are the manner and meaning of the devotional modes focusing verbally and visually on the Virgin as patroness of the fine style.

Malderus was consecrated bishop on August 7, 1611, and so the series must date from soon afterward, and may in fact commemorate his elevation to this high office. The title-print features his episcopal arms and the inscription 'to the most meritorious lord Johannes Malderus, right reverend diocesan bishop of Antwerp' [Fig. 1].⁴ Just below, Wierix avows his eternal devotion to Malderus (*aeternum Devotus*), whose diocese Antwerp and episcopal seat, the Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Kerk, appear in the panoramic vignette beneath the dedicatory plaque.⁵ The rosary of pearls, its decades clearly marked, enframing the bishop's coat of arms, signifies his fervent devotion to Mary, and undoubtedly alludes to his membership in the Latijnse Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Boedschap (Latin Sodality of Our Dear Lady), founded by the Jesuits of Antwerp in 1585.⁶ The epitaph-like monument, from the

cat., Cassa di Risparmio, Loreto] (Loreto: 1995) 15–30; Bortolotti L. – Di Monte M. – Mozzetti F. – Sarti G., "Iconografia, devozione e culto lauretano. Analisi e riflessioni", in *ibidem* 31–45; and Di Matteo M., "I plastici processionali della Santa Casa di Loreto. Tra devozione e architettura", in *ibidem* 46–72.

³ On the *Rosarium*, see Thurston H., "Rosary", in Herbermann et alii (eds.), *The Catholic Encyclopedia* vol. XIII 184–189, esp. 188–189 on the proliferation of Confraternities of the Holy Rosary, and 186 on Alan de Rupe, identified by the Bollandists as chief source of the notion that Rosary devotion was instituted by Saint Dominic; and Graef, *Mary II* 17–21.

⁴ 'Reverendissimo Domino D. Ioanni Maldero Antverpiensium Episcopo Meritissimo'.

⁵ 'Hieronymus Wierix aeternum Devotus Dicabat. Faciebat. Excudebat'. The cathedral tower completes the central axis comprising the dedication plaque, the episcopal coat of arms, and the holy name of Mary.

⁶ On the Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Boedschap, founded by Franciscus Costerus, S.J., see Thijs A.K.L., "Leven in en rond de 'Sodaliteit' te Antwerpen: sedert eeuwen een tijdspiegel", in Baek-Schilders H. (ed.), *De Nottebohmzaal: boek en mecenaat* [exh. cat., Stadsbibliotheek, Antwerp] (Antwerp: 1993) 13–27, esp. 15–18; Manaerts R., "Het Sodaliteitsgebouw en zijn decoratie (1623–1773). Een reconstructie van twee barokke Mariakapellen", in *ibidem* 63–81; Marnef G., "Protestant Conversions in an Age of Catholic Reformation: The Case of Sixteenth-Century Antwerp", in Gelderblom A.-J. – Jong J.L. de – Vaeck M. van (eds.), *The Low Countries as a Crossroads of Religious Beliefs*, Intersections 3 (2004) 33–47, esp. 38–39; Po-Chia Hsia

corbels of which hang votive hearts, indicates that the memory of his name will forever be linked with the holy name of the Virgin Mary, among whose angelic choirs of votaries he desires to be enshrined. The music-making angels perhaps refer to Malderus in another way as well: having held the Thomist chair in scholastic theology at the Catholic University of Louvain, he was closely identified with the Doctor Angelicus, on whose treatise *De angelis* he would later compose a commentary.⁷ The chaplet of roses just above the rosary identifies it as the Virgin's crown – to recite the rosary is tantamount to confirming her royal dignity as queen of heaven. Brilliantly illuminated within the *rosarium* are the Jesuit-inspired logo of a heart pierced by three nails, that stands for Mary's compassion for the sacrificial Christ; hovering over her name is the heavenly crown that recitation of the rosary reaffirms as a Marian prerogative. All these titular features suggest that the *Maria* as a whole is a coded prosopographical image of Johannes Malderus, or better, of his meditative *anima*, whose pious attachment to the Virgin the series exemplifies and thereby allows us to behold, consider, and emulate.

Each successive plate substitutes a celestial image of Mary and Jesus for that of the episcopal escutcheon within the rosary: the heraldic portrait of Malderus is converted into a pictorial view of the Marian mystery he can implicitly be seen to visualize by means of meditation

R., *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540–1770* (Cambridge: 2005) 226; and Muller J., "Jesuit Uses of Art in the Province of Flanders", in O'Malley J.W. – Bailey G.A. – Harris S.J. – Frank Kennedy T., S.J. (eds.), *The Jesuits II: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773* (Toronto: 2006) 113–156, esp. 124–129. On the related Jesuit Sodality of the Bachelors (Sodaliteit van de bejaerde Jongmans), see Mannaerts R., "Register der inschrijvingen in de Sodaliteit der meerderjarige jongmans onder de titel Geboorte van O.-L. Vrouwe, te Antwerpen", "Antoon Van Dyck, *De H. Maagd Maria met het Kind en de H. Rosalia*", and "Antoon Van Dyck, *De gelukzalige Herman-Jozef*", in Baisier C. (ed.), *Antoon Van Dyck anders bekeken: over 'registers en contrefeytsels, tronies en copyen' in Antwerpse kerken en kloosters* [exh. cat., Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal et al., Antwerp] (Antwerp: 1999) 45–54; and Diskant Muir C., "Art and Religion in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp: Van Dyck's *Mystic Marriage of the Blessed Hermann-Joseph*", *Simiolus* 28 (2000–2001) 51–69.

⁷ Malderus later published treatises on selected topics from book one and book two, parts one and two, of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*; see *Ioannis Malderi episcopi Antverpiensis [...] De virtutibus theologicis et Iustitia et religione commentaria ad secundam secundae D. Thomae* (Antwerp, Balthasar and Jan Moretus: 1616); *Ioannis Malderi episcopi Atverpiensis [...] In primam secundae D. Thomae commentaria: de fine et beatitudine hominis; de actibus humanis; de virtutibus, vitiis, et peccatis; de legibus; de gratia; de iustificatione; de meritis* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus, widow of Jan Moretus, and Jan Meurs: 1623); and *Commentarii de S. Trinitate, Creatione in genere, et de Angelis, ad primam partem D. Thomae* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1634).

on the *Salve*, *Litania*, and *Rosarium* [Figs. 2–8]. The rosary now appears larger, as if we were drawing closer to the bishop's soul, and it resembles a princely *corona*, as if to emphasize that meditating on these prayers re-enacts the coronation of the Virgin, a point made clearly by plate 1, which portrays the Holy Trinity crowning Mary queen of heaven [Fig. 2]. The central scene, here as elsewhere in the series, illustrates the loving relationship between mother and son: the coronation of the Virgin describes the glorious fruit of this lifelong bond; illuminated by the Spirit, Mary receives the immortal palm from the Son, the regal scepter from the Father. Her installation as heavenly queen ensures her intercessory potency, and this scene therefore serves perfectly to elucidate the opening line of the *Salve* – 'Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy' – that tacitly calls upon the celestial Mary to exercise her merciful office of advocate by interceding on our behalf at the throne of Christ.⁸ Superimposed on the *corona* are four roundels inscribed with versicles from the *Litania Loretana* that amplify her title of queen: queen of prophets, of apostles, of martyrs, and of confessors. The supporting images depict representatives of these groups – among them, Moses and David, Peter and Paul, Stephen and Lawrence, and the four doctors of the Church – all lit from above, as if by the light of the coronation occurring at the summit of heaven. As the central scene translates the episcopal coat of arms into a Marian mystery, so the oval scene in the lower register translates the panoramic view of Antwerp, dominated by the Onze-Lieve-Vrouw-Kerk, into an ideal scene of Marian worship. Virgin martyrs and the virginal Saint Joseph adore the infant Jesus and venerate the Theotokos, who raises her scepter as *Regina* and mediates the blessing of Christ as *Mater misericordiae*. This scene alludes to the opening versicles of the Loretan Litany, that identity Mary the Holy Mother of God, as the *Sancta Virgo virginum*.⁹

There were several devotional and institutional contexts for this *compositum mixtum* bringing together the chief prayers of the Virgin. The *Salve Regina*, sung as an antiphon between Trinity Sunday and the Saturday before the first Sunday in Advent, often functioned as a final prayer to the rosary. Conversely, the *Litania Loretana* invokes

⁸ 'Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiae'.

⁹ 'Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis. Sancta Dei Genitrix, ora pro nobis. Sancta Virgo virginum, ora pro nobis'.

Mary as queen of the most holy rosary in the penultimate versicle.¹⁰ The Antwerp Jesuits, Franciscus Costerus in particular, founder of the Latin Sodality in 1585, were fervent promoters of the rosary, as also of the Marian cult of Loreto, having been installed there as privileged *penitenzieri* since 1554.¹¹ In fact, the Jesuit theologian Petrus Canisius is believed to have published the first printed text of the Litany of Loreto ca. 1557 (*Letania Loretana. Ordnung der Letaney von unser lieben Frawen wie sie zu Loreto alle Samstag gehalten*).¹² Sixtus V had urged preachers to propagate the Litany by papal bull in 1587, and this reverent petition, along with the rosary, the *Salve Regina*, and complementary prayers, such as the *Alma redemptoris mater*, *Ave Regina coelorum*, *Ave maris stella*, and the *Litanien van onse lieve Vrouwe uyt die heylige Schrifture* (*Litanies of Our Dear Lady, Taken from Holy Scripture*), was prescribed for gatherings of the Latin Sodality, as Guilielmus de Pretere specifies in the *Handtboexken der Sodaliteyt oft broederschap vande H. Maeget Maria, inghestelt inde Soci. Iesu* (*Handbook of the Sodality or Brotherhood of the Holy Virgin Mary*,

¹⁰ ‘Regina sacratissimi Rosarii, ora pro nobis’.

¹¹ On Costerus, chief founder of Marian sodalities in the Low Countries, see Poncelet A., S.J., *Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus dans les anciens Pays-Bas: Établissement de la Compagnie de Jésus en Belgique et ses développements jusqu'à la fin du règne d'Albert et d'Isabelle*, 2 vols. (Brussels: 1927–1928) I, 117 n. 4, 131–439 *passim*; II 18 n. 2, 55–185 and 324–537 *passim*; Hardeman R., S.J., *F. Costerus (1532–1619)*, *Vlaamsche apostel en volksredenaar* (Alken: 1933); Chipps Smith J., *Sensuous Worship: Jesuits and the Art of the Early Catholic Reformation in Germany* (Princeton – Oxford: 2002) 46–47, 78, 85, 120; and Dekoninck R., “Ad imaginem”: *Statuts, fonctions et usages de l'image dans la littérature spirituelle jésuite du XVII^e siècle*, *Travaux du Grand Siècle* 26 (Geneva: 2005) 156, 188, 220, 240, 259–263, 267, 286, 300. Costerus describes the form and function of the ideal Marian sodality in his *Libellus Sodalitatis: hoc est, christianarum institutionum libri quinque, in gratiam sodalitatis B. Virginis Mariae* (Antwerp, Jan Moretus: 1603). On Pope Julius III's choice of the Jesuit order as chief source for the shrine's penitentiaries, see Torsellino Orazio, *Lauretanae historiae libri quinque* (Rome, Aloisius Zannetti: 1597), translated as *The History of our B. Lady of Loreto*, trans. T. Price (Saint Omer, n.p.: 1608; reprint ed., Ilkley and London: 1976) 256–259.

¹² On Canisius and the Loretan cult of the Virgin, see Paulus N., “Die Einführung der lauretanischen Litanei in Deutschland durch den seligen Canisius”, *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 26 (1902) 572–583; Nuijen C., *Canisius en de Santa Casa, of Hoe een Heilige over Loreto dacht* (Amsterdam: 1922); Graef, Mary II 21; Fisher A.J., *Music and Religious Identity in Counter-Reformation Augsburg, 1580–1630* (Aldershot: 2004) 258–259; and Heal B., *The Cult of the Virgin Mary in Early Modern Germany: Protestant and Catholic Piety, 1500–1648* (Cambridge – New York et al.: 2007) 150–51.

*Established in the Society of Jesus).*¹³ Published by Hieronymus Verdussen in 1611 and 1615, and reissued in a revised edition by Hendrick Artssens in 1620, this popular handbook stipulates that the litanies of the Virgin, by which De Pretere means either the Litany of Loreto or the Litany of Our Lady, Taken from Holy Scripture, should be recited at the close of every meeting.¹⁴ Moreover, in honour of their patroness, the individual *sodales* must pray the rosary every day and the *Salve Regina* every evening.¹⁵ On Sundays and feast days they are expected to precede the rosary with the Little Office of the Virgin (or alternatively, the Seven Penitential Psalms).¹⁶ De Pretere also instructs his readers – members of the Latin Sodality, as well as its sister organization, the Sodality of Bachelors, founded in 1608 – that the *Salve Regina* is especially suitable for gatherings held between the octave after Pentecost and Advent. The *Handtboexken* provides a ready frame of reference for two notable aspects of Wierix's series: its portrayal of Mary as an attentive patroness and solicitous mediatrix who secures the beholder's relation to Christ, and its description of the multifarious constituencies – nobles and commoners, soldiers and civilians, clerics and merchants, married men and bachelors – whom she is seen to represent and safeguard. With regard to the first feature, De Pretere regards patronage and mediation as the principal benefits of membership in the sodality:

They [the members] stand under the special care and protection of the worthy Mother of God and glorious Maiden Maria, who always, as the true mother of mercy, keeps specially safe all those who with steadfast love seek to serve her, and therefore all *sodales* who choose her as bride, patroness and advocate; thus do they enjoy her assistance not only in life but even more in the hour of death, as has been apparent to many, for truly, what is there that loyal servants should not receive from so great a bride, patroness, and mother?¹⁷

¹³ On Sixtus V's bull "Reddituri", promulgated on 11 July 1587, see De Santi, "Litany of Loreto", IX 290. The Dominicans recited the Litany of Loreto after the *Salve Regina* at the end of the Office on Saturdays, a practice formally ratified at the general chapter of Bologna in 1615, on which see *ibidem*.

¹⁴ Pretere Guilielmus de, *Handtboexken der Sodaliteyt oft broederschap vande H. Maeghet Maria, inghestelt inde Soci. Iesu* (Antwerp, Hendrick Artssens: 1620) 37–38, *ordinantie* 4.

¹⁵ *Ibidem* 43, *ordinantien* 5 and 6.

¹⁶ *Ibidem* 44, *ordinantie* 7.

¹⁷ *Ibidem* 9, *ordinantie* 6: 'Sy staen onder de sonderlinghe bewaring ende beschermenisse van de weerdighe Moeder Godts ende glorieuse Maghet Maria, de welcke

Jesuit sodalities of the Virgin, insists De Pretere, are by definition inclusive, designed to encompass numerous sub-groups who, though they meet separately, share a like devotion to Mary, which they exercise in light of commonly held rules and regulations: ‘The ordinances are taken up and exercised by many, not only common folk, but also the great, gentlemen and princes both of the Church and of the world, throughout every region, so that in some cities up to eight or nine sodalities are found, befitting the various conditions [of persons], and yet all accord with the first and foremost [sodality], convened in Rome, through which all are united with the others elsewhere, bound [jointly] by the letters patent promulgated by papal decree’.¹⁸

However, regardless of this normative institutional setting, the *Maria* series remains nearly unique in assembling these specific prayers – *Salve Regina*, *Litania Loretana*, and *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* – into a meditative apparatus that bodies forth the devotional ideals of a specific person. There is a single precedent, the *Salve Regina* series, designed, engraved, published by Antonius II Wierix in 1598, with a dedication to Guilielmus de Bergis (Willem de Berghes), third bishop of Antwerp (1597–1601) [Figs. 9–16].¹⁹ The seven plates, introduced by a frontispiece cum virtual epitaph honouring De Bergis’s exemplary faith and prudence, consist of visual and textual references to two prayers – *Salve Regina* and *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* – that are ingeniously interwoven with emblematic roundels, seven per sheet, enumerating symbolic types of the Virgin, taken mainly from the Old Testament. These roundels constitute a Marian litany that closely resembles, rather than coinciding with, the *Litanien van onse lieve Vrouwe uyt die heylige Schrifture*. In the ovals below appear further

ghelijck sy is waerachtighe moeder der bermhertigheydt, neemt oock bijsonderlijck altijds in hare bewarenisse alle de ghene die met getrouwre liefde haer soecken te dienen, ende daerom ghelijck de Sodales haer verkiesen voor eene vrouwe, Patroonersse ende Advocatersse; soo ghenieten sy hare bijstandt in het leven, ende principalijck in de ure des doods; ghelijck het in veel ghebleken heeft: ende voor-waer wat en sullen ghetrouwe dienaers van sulck eene vrouwe, Patroonersse ende moeder niet verklrijghen?

¹⁸ Ibidem 5–6, *ordinantie* 2: ‘D’ordinantien worden aenveert ende gheoeffent van veel, niet alleen ghemeyne lieden, maer oock groote, so gheestelijcke als wereldtlijcke Heeren ende Princen in alle ghewesten, soo dat in eenige steden tot acht oft neghen dusdanige Vergaderinghen na diversche staten ghevonden worden, zijnde nochtans al te samen met de principaelste, ende eerste binnen Roome vergadert, ende door haer met d’andere op alle ghewesten des werelts versaeamt na het uyt-wijzen der Pauselijcker brieven verbonden’.

¹⁹ Van Ruyven-Zeman – Leesberg, *Wierix Family* V 147–153, nos. 1045–1052.



Fig. 9. Antoon II Wierix, *Salve Regina*: Title with Dedication to Bishop Guilielmo de Bergis (Antwerp, Antoon II Wierix: 1598). Engraving, 13.8 × 7.8 cm. By permission of The British Museum.



Fig. 10. Antoon II Wierix, *Salve Regina, Mater misericordiae*. Plate 1 from *Salve Regina* (Antwerp, Antoon II Wierix: 1598). Engraving, 13.7 × 7.8 cm. By permission of The British Museum.



Fig. 11. Antoon II Wierix, *Vita, dulcedo, & spes nostra salve*. Plate 2 from *Salve Regina* (Antwerp, Antoon II Wierix: 1598). Engraving, 13.5 × 7.8 cm. By permission of The British Museum.



Fig. 12. Antoon II Wierix, *Ad te clamamus exules filij Euae*. Plate 3 from *Salve Regina* (Antwerp, Antoon II Wierix: 1598). Engraving, 13.5 × 7.8 cm. By permission of The British Museum.



Fig. 13. Antoon II Wierix, *Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes in hac lachrimarum valle*. Plate 4 from *Salve Regina* (Antwerp, Antoon II Wierix: 1598). Engraving, 13.6 × 7.8 cm. By permission of The British Museum.



Fig. 14. Antoon II Wierix, *Eia ergo advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordiae oculos ad nos converte*. Plate 5 from *Salve Regina* (Antwerp, Antoon II Wierix: 1598). Engraving, 13.5 × 7.8 cm. By permission of The British Museum.



Fig. 15. Antoon II Wierix, *Et Iesum benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende*. Plate 6 from *Salve Regina* (Antwerp, Antoon II Wierix: 1598). Engraving, 13.6 × 7.8 cm. By permission of The British Museum.



Fig. 16. Antoon II Wierix, *O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.* Plate 7 from *Salve Regina* (Antwerp, Antoon II Wierix: 1598). Engraving, 13.6 × 7.7 cm. By permission of The British Museum.

types of Mary, this time in the form of heroines from the Old Testament, whose courageous deeds – Esther pleading before Ahasuerus in plate 3, Abigail mollifying David in plate 6, to cite just two – prefigure the Marian titles and maternal offices, such as *Patrona-Mater divinæ gratiae* and *Mediatrix-Mater vitae*, inscribed at the top of each print, along with an apposite line from the *Salve Regina* [Figs. 12 and 15].²⁰ Like Esther, Mary is a patroness to her exiled people, upon whom, in their efforts to recover the kingdom of heaven, they may call for assistance ('Ad te clamamus exules filij Evae'), and like Abigail, she is a *mediatrix* who converts divine anger into mercy, calling forth the love of Christ ('Et Iesum benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende'). The larger scenes framed by rosaries serve as antitypes that fulfill the exemplary and emblematic types analogized in the roundels and ovals: the double intercession of Jesus and Mary completes what the scene of Esther before Ahasuerus and the symbols drawn from *Exodus* 31 (*Tabernaculum foederis*), *Numbers* 4 (*Mensa propositionis*), *Numbers* 10 (*Arca testamenti*), *Exodus* 25 (*Propitiatorium inter Cherubim* and *Candelabrum cum septem lucernis*), *Hebrews* 9 (*Urna aurea habens manna*), and *Exodus* 30 (*Altare thimiamatis*) merely adumbrate [Fig. 12]. So too, Mary lovingly offers the infant Jesus to the chaste virgins kneeling around her, in fulfillment of the propitiatory offering made by Abigail to David and of the symbols distilled from *Psalm* 18 (*Thalamus sponsi*), *Canticle* 4 (*Hortus conclusus* and *Favus distillans*), *Ecclesiasticus* 50 (*Vas auri solidum*), *Wisdom* 7 (*Speculum sine macula*), *Revelation* 5 (*Liber scriptus intus et foris*), and 1 *Corinthians* 6 (*Templum Spiritus Sancti*) [Fig. 15].

Hieronymus Wierix clearly relied upon Antoon's plates, using them as compositional templates and as models for the main Marian scenes, but he also diverged from the earlier series [Figs. 1–8]. He jettisoned its typological structure and argument, instead introducing texts and images drawn from the Litany of Loreto, a change that allowed him to trope the theme of artifice in ways that bear upon the Jesuit construal

²⁰ Scriptural citations, written just above the ovals, separate them from the main Marian scenes. The analogy between the images of the double intercession and of Esther before Ahasuerus in plate 3 converts the text from *Esther* 7:3 ('Dona mihi animam meam pro qua rogo, et populum meum pro quo obsecro') into a type of the Virgin's intercession at the throne of God. Similarly, the analogy between the images of the Virgin and Child surrounded by chaste votaries and of Abigail before David converts the text from 1 *Kings* 25:33 ('Benedicta tu quae prohibuisti me hodie ne irem ad sanguinem') into a type of Marian propitiation.

of the Marian shrine and its votive rituals, as I hope to show. His prints differ not only in kind but also degree, for their execution is uncommonly fine, surpassing even Antoon's already high level of technical refinement. This places them among the finest of his engravings: exquisitely rendered at very small scale (about 135 × 85 mm.), they are entirely composed of concentric hatches and cross-hatches very evenly spaced and virtually undetectable to the naked eye. These lines cohere into passages of graduated tone that secure subtle yet startling chiaroscuro effects. Two questions immediately arise, both of which turn on the relation between form and function, manner and meaning: what does meditating on these interwoven Marian prayers entail, and how does the conspicuous artifice of these prints serve as an instrument of Marian devotion?

Let me proceed by briefly summarizing the rest of the series, before circling back to these questions, answers to which may be found in the peculiarities of the Loretan cult, and chiefly the premium its adherents placed on highly wrought donaries. Plate 2 illustrates the versicle from the *Salve*, 'Our life, sweetness, and hope, hail' [Fig. 3].²¹ Her eyes closed, Mary communes internally with the infant Christ, bearing him as he bears the cross and offers his redemptive blessing. The four roundels construe life, sweetness, and hope defensively, showing how Jesus and Mary have actively supported the Church in its battle against heretics, the representatives of death, bitterness, and despair. Inspired by God, Saint Mercurius rides forth to assassinate the anti-Christian emperor Julian the Apostate.²² Two imperial iconoclasts, Leo Isauricus and Constantine V Copronymus, are laid low on the battlefield.²³ Three notorious heretics – the anticonservationalist Arius, the denier of the *Theotokos* Nestorius, and the dualist Manicheus – lie dead upon

²¹ 'Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra salve'.

²² On Julian the Apostate, see K. Hoeber, "Julian the Apostate", in Herbermann et alii (eds.), *The Catholic Encyclopedia* VIII 558–559. On Saint Mercurius, see Delehaye H., "La Translatio s. Mercurii Beneventum", in Delehaye H. (ed.), *Mélanges Godefroid Kurth I* (Liège: 1908) 17–24; and idem, *Les légendes grecques des saints militaires* (Paris: 1909) 234–243; and Sauget J.-M., "Mercurio, santo, martire di Cesarea di Cappadocia", in Caraffa P. – Morelli G. et alii (eds.), *Bibliotheca Sanctorum*, 13 vols. (Rome: 1961–1969) IX 362–368; on the iconography of Mercurius, see Raggi A.M., "Iconografia", in *Bibliotheca Sanctorum* IX 368.

²³ On the iconoclasts Leo III Isauricus and his son Constantine V Copronymus, see Hollingsworth P.A., "Constantine V", in Kazhdan A. – Talbot A.-M. et alii (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, 3 vols. (Oxford: 1991) I 501; and Hollingsworth P.A., "Leo III", ibidem II 1208–1209.

a plain, having been struck down by divine justice (the slop bucket refers to Arius's ignominious death by evacuation).²⁴ Three great anti-papist reformers, Luther, Calvin, and Menno, are shot dead by the arrows of divine vengeance. Implicit are such Loretan titles of the Virgin as *Virgo potens*, *Speculum justitiae*, and *Auxilium Christianorum*.

Below, in contrast to the felled enemies of the Church, a venerable man humbly genuflects before the Virgin and Child, his right hand clasped by hers, their extended arms forming a bridge to the benedictory gesture of Christ. This epitome of Marian intercession called forth by pious supplication illustrates key passages from several psalms and antiphons recited during the Little Office of the Virgin, that beg the assistance of Mary as mediatrix and co-redemptrix. Like the *Salve*, *Litania*, and *Rosarium*, these prayers from the Little Office focus on her intercessory potency. For instance, with eyes directed toward Mary and Jesus by way of his proffered hand, the dignitary meekly appeals for succor in the imagery of Psalm 122 and its subjoined *oratio*: he has 'lifted up [his] eyes' to God on high, fixing them upon the merciful Lord, like the 'eyes of servants [...] on the hands of their masters', like the 'eyes of the handmaid [...] on the hands of her mistress'; having brought himself low, he pleads to rise anew from his iniquities through the intercession of the Holy Mother of God.²⁵ He also embodies the imagery of Psalm 62: entering the sanctuary of God, he 'lift[s] up [his] hands in His name' and discovers, his soul cleaving closely to God, that 'His right hand hath received me'.²⁶ Kneeling before the 'couch of this Virgin', one hand entwined with hers, the other pressed close to

²⁴ On Arius, see Barry W., "Arius", in Herbermann et alii (eds.), *The Catholic Encyclopedia* I 718–719; on Arianism, idem, "Arianism", in ibidem I 707–710; on Manichaeus, see Arendzen J.P., "Manichaeism", in ibidem IX 591–597, esp. 591; on Nestorius, see Chapam J., "Nestorius and Nestorianism", in ibidem X 755–759.

²⁵ "Officium parvum Beatae Mariae ad Sextam", in *Breviarium Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Concilij Tridentini restitutum* (Salamanca, Guillelmus Foquel: 1589) 182: 'Ad te levavi oculos meos: qui habitas in caelis. Ecce sicut oculi servorum, in manibus dominorum suorum, sicut oculi ancillae in manibus dominae sua, ita oculi nostri ad Dominum Deum nostrum, donec misereatur nostri'. "Oratio", in *Breviarium Romanum* 183: 'Concede, misericors Deus, fragilitati nostrae praesidium, ut qui sanctae Dei genitricis memoriam agimus, intercessionis eius auxilio, a nostris iniquitatibus resurgamus'.

²⁶ "Officium parvum Beatae Mariae ad Laudem", in *Breviarium Romanum* 174: 'sic in sancto apparui tibi, ut viderem virtutem tuam et gloriam tuam [...]. Sic benedicante in vita mea et in nomine tuo levabo manus meas [...] adhaesit anima mea post te: me suscepit dextera tua'.

his heart, his eyes fixed upon her face and that of Jesus, he re-enacts the stance taken by the supplicant in Psalm 22 and its antiphon:

Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord: or who shall stand in his holy place.

The innocent in hands, and clean of heart, who hath not taken his soul in vain, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbour.

He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God his Saviour.

This is the generation of them that seek him, of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob. [...]

Antiphon: Before the couch of this Virgin, repeat for us the sweet songs of supplication.²⁷

Supported by *Maria Theotokos*, who bears him up as she jointly bears the infant Christ, the elderly man can further be seen to express *Psalm* 94's adjuration to 'adore and fall down [...] before the Lord', as well as to represent the supplicant of *Psalm* 130, who compares himself to a 'weaned child', having 'behaved and quieted myself', 'my heart [...] not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty', foregoing to 'exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me'.²⁸ Finally, he is the very image of Marian devotion described in the third *lectio* of the "Officium Beatae Mariae in Sabbatho", taken from Saint Bernard's *Sermo in Apocalypsim* 12; like Moses before the burning bush, he puts aside all carnal thoughts, eagerly desiring to attend Mary who mediates betwixt Christ and the Church: 'My brothers, in most devout supplication let us cast ourselves down at the blessed feet of Mary [...]. Let us take hold of her, never letting go until she has blessed us: for she is powerful'.²⁹

²⁷ "Officium parvum Beatae Mariae ad Matutinam", in *Breviarium Romanum* 167: 'Quis ascendet in montem Domini? Aut quis stabit in loco sancto eius? Innocens manibus et mundo corde, qui non accepit in vano animam suam nec iuravit in dolo proximo suo. Hic accipiet benedictionem a Domino et misericordiam a Deo salutari suo. Haec est generatio quaerentium eum, quaerentium faciem Dei Iacob'. "Antiphona", in *Breviarium Romanum* 167: 'Ante torum huius virginis frequentate nobis dulcia cantica dramatis'.

²⁸ *Breviarium Romanum* 165: 'Venite adoremus & Procidamus ante Deum'. "Officium parvum Beatae Mariae ad Completorium", in *Breviarium Romanum* 163: 'Domine, non est exaltatum cor meum neque elati sunt oculi mei. Neque ambulavi in magni neque in mirabilibus super me. Si non humiliter sentiebam, sed exaltavi animam meam. Sicut ablactatus est super matre sua, ita retributio in anima mea'.

²⁹ "Mense Octobr. Sermo S. Berna[r]d. Abbat. Ex *Sermo in Apocalypsim* 12 ante medium. Lectio iij", in "Officium Beatae Mariae in Sabbatho", in *Breviarium Romanum* 158: '[...] fratres mei, et devotissima supplicatione beatis illius [Mariae] pedibus

Plate 3 represents the double intercession of Jesus and Mary, who petition for the remission of sins before the radiant name of God: ‘To you we cry, the banished children of Eve’ [Fig. 4].³⁰ The conjunction of image and versicle suggests that the sacrificial Christ and his mother now aged by grief, the one showing his wounds, the other praying zealously, act in our place and plead on our behalf. The roundels depict the benefits granted through the mediation of the new Eve: life to the dead, health to the infirm, refuge to sinners, and consolation to the afflicted. The latter three inscriptions quote versicles from the Litany of Loreto; the title *Vita mortuorum* distills the closing prayer, that beseeches God to free humankind from perpetual death by the intercession of the glorious Virgin Mary (‘Virginis Matris Mariae [...] ejus pia intercessione [...] a morte perpetua liberemur’). Below, Mary appears to the praying Saint Bernard, allowing him to drink her mother’s milk, in proof of her tender mercy toward penitent sinners.³¹

Plate 4 represents the Virgin suckling the infant Jesus, as a warrant of the maternal love that allows her to plead for all who are hard-pressed: ‘To you we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears’ [Fig. 5].³² The roundels describe instances of great necessity – battles, sieges, tempests, calamities – when the Virgin’s intercession secures victory, strengthens resolution, offers succour, or defends against adversity, raising forlorn spirits. Taken from hymns and litanies to be found in the *Breviarium Romanum*, *Officium Beatae Mariae Virginis*, and *Horae beatissimae Virginis Mariae*, the Marian titles here and in the last three plates can be interpreted as specific cases of the general prerogatives cited in the Litany of Loreto, in which Mary is designated *Mater boni consuli*, *Virgo potens*, *Causa nostrae laetitiae*, *Consolatrix afflictionum*, *Auxilium Christianorum*, and perhaps most pertinently, *Turris Davidica* (Tower of David, that is, Bul-

provoluamur. Teneamus eam, nec dimittamus donec benedixerit nobis: potens est enim [...]. Merito quidem admiraris, Moyses sancte, et curiosus desideras intueri’.

³⁰ ‘Ad te clamamus exules filij Evae’.

³¹ This scene substitutes for the image of *Maria lactans* baring her breast to Christ, more commonly seen in scenes of the double intercession: Mary as *Mater Dei* entreats Christ with a show of her mother’s milk, moving Christ to entreat the Father with a show of his holy blood. Wierix instead gives Jesus and Mary virtual parity as intercessors kneeling before the holy name of God. On the cult of Saint Bernard, see Gildas M., “Bernard of Clairvaux”, in Herbermann et alii (eds.), *The Catholic Encyclopedia* II 498–501, esp. 500.

³² ‘Ad te suspiramus gementes et flentes in hac lachrimarum valle’.

wark of Strength).³³ Below, pilgrims kneel before an effigy of the Virgin and Child, supplicating their aid.

Plate 5 illustrates the versicle, 'Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us' [Fig. 6].³⁴ Portrayed as the bride and bridegroom of the Song of Songs, Mary and Jesus stare deeply into each other's eyes, exchanging nuptial wreaths (more precisely, holding one wreath for himself, Jesus offers another to Mary). Mary raises one hand in a gesture of address, placing the other against her heart; she thus indicates that she is entreating Christ to relieve our many burdens, her merciful gaze having indeed been turned toward us. Focusing on prisoners of all kinds (of the state, but also metaphorically of the body), the roundels describe her as patron of the condemned, guardian of those about to lose their life, solace of the enfeebled, and protector of the vanquished. Below, hierarchies of church and state implore her intercession.

Plate 6 portrays Mary as the bride of Christ wearing the nuptial wreath proffered in the previous plate [Fig. 7]. She holds forth her son who reaches forward to extend a helping hand toward needful humanity: 'And after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus'.³⁵ Jesus turns and looks at his mother, affirming that his impulse to aid and abet flows from her. The roundels depict Mary's agency in the mystery of the Incarnation: through her, the Word was made flesh at the Annunciation, made himself known to Elizabeth and

³³ Among the suffrages from which the *Maria*'s tituli derive, see especially the antiphons, canticles, and hymns, such as the "Ave Regina caelorum", "Quae est ista, quae progreditur", and "Ave maris stella", that punctuate the Office of the Blessed Virgin, as well as the penitential litany associated with the Seven Penitential Psalms, and the supplementary Marian prayers, "Oratio ad B. Virginem Mariam", "Alia Oratio ad eamdem, et simul ad B. Ioannem Evangelistam", "Commendatio ad Virginem Mariam", and "Alia Oratio ad Virginem". I have consulted the reformed edition of the text, approved by Pius V and issued frequently by the Plantin firm; see *Officium beatae Mariae Virginis, nuper reformatum, & Pii V. Pont. Max. iussu editum* (Antwerp, Balthusar Moretus: 1662) 37, 70, 172, 176, 279–282, 512–515, 515–17, 520, and 520–521. The supplementary *orationes* also often appear at the close of editions of the *Horae*; see, for example, the "Oratio ad B. Virginem Mariam", in *Horae in laudem beatissimae Virginis Mariae ad usum Romanum. Accesserunt denuo aliquot suffragia* (Lyons, Gulielmus Rovillus: 1550) [unpaginated]: 'Obsecro te, Domina sancta Maria, mater Dei, pietate plenissima, summi Regis filia, mater gloriissima, mater orphanorum, consolatio desolatorum, via errantium, salus omnium in te sperantium, virgo ante partum, virgo in partu, et virgo post partum, fons misericordiae, fons salutis et gratiae, fons pietatis et laetitiae, fons vitae et veniae, etc.'

³⁴ 'Eia ergo advocata nostra, illos tuos misericordiae oculos ad nos converte'.

³⁵ 'Et Iesum benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende'.

the uterine John at the Visitation, revealed himself to the world at the Nativity, and began the process of redemption, shedding his blood sacrificially for the first time at the Circumcision. These scenes exemplify her role as mother and vessel of the Word, dignities upon which the Loretan Litany dwells at great length: *Sancta Dei Genitrix, Mater Christi, Mater divinae gratiae, Mater Creatoris, Mater Salvatoris, Vas spirituale, Vas honorabile, Vas insigniae devotionis, Rosa mystica, Foederis arca*. Below, maidens and youths pray to the Virgin, asking her to bless and make fruitful their impending nuptials.

Plate 7 combines the *Salve*'s closing appeal for Marian clemency, benevolence, and compassion – 'O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary' – with the *Litanie*'s glorious praise of Mary as the *Sedes Sapientiae, Regina pacis*, and *Regina sine labe originali concepta* [Fig. 8].³⁶ The implication is that she is the mediatrix *nonpareille* because she remains sweetly accessible even in her heavenly exaltation. Throned upon her thigh, held firmly aloft, the infant Christ reveals himself as divine wisdom, discoursing earnestly, his expression wise beyond his years; at the same time, he lifts his robe, exposing his tender flesh, thus confirming that he is the Word incarnate. If Mary is the Throne of Wisdom, she is also the Queen of Peace. Crowned and holding a scepter, she presents herself as the heavenly queen; accompanied by Christ, with her left foot she crushes the head of the serpent described in *Revelation* 12: 3, in fulfillment of the divine promise made in *Genesis* 3:15, that a woman and her son shall crush Satan, allaying the enmity that sin has sown between God and men. Radiant like the sun, her head encircled by stars, she appears in the form of the apocalyptic woman, described in *Revelation* 12:1–2, who stands for the Immaculate Conception; accordingly, Mary embodies the Church brought forth from the Christ born to a woman unstained by original sin. The roundels amplify the apotheosis of the Virgin: participant at the Pentecost, she is the exultation of good hope; praying humbly, she is the glory of angels, exalted by modesty; raised incorruptible at the Assumption, she is the triumph of the mortal world; crowned by the Holy Trinity, she is the apex of sanctity. Below, male and female saints surround and venerate the Virgin, whose stature and radiance signify, in the words of the Litany, that she is the *Regina sanctorum omnium*. Throughout the series, Mary glows with divine light, but she becomes especially

³⁶ 'O Clemens, o Pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria'.

refulgent in plates 6 and 7, which portray her as bride of Christ and the Church [Figs. 7 and 8]. This imagery of light likewise derives from two of the Litany's praises: she is the *Stella matutina*, whence arises the light of salvation, and the *Speculum justitiae*, whose soul perfectly mirrors the light of God, as described in *Wisdom* 7:26 and 29: 'For she is the brightness of eternal light, the unspotted mirror of divine majesty, and the image of his goodness. [...] She is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars: being compared with the light, she is found before it'.³⁷

The *copia* of Marian praises and superabundant exempla of her intercessory miracles, all seen to issue from her intimate and privileged relation to Christ, constitute a clear allusion to Loreto, famed for its sheer profusion of Marian miracles, both past and present, upon which the Loretan pilgrim was urged to meditate with corporeal and spiritual eyes. Louis Richeome's meditative treatise *Le pelerin de Lorete*, for example, describes Loreto as a miraculous theater of divine power; I quote from the 1629 translation by Edward Worsley: 'but in this holy House, he hath wrought so many, and so markable [miracles], besides those I have already spoken off, that he seemeth to have made choice thereof, out of the whole world, for a Theater, there to shew the maiesty, the power, treasure, and graces of his omnipotency, wisedome, and bounty'.³⁸ These divine benefits, obtained by the Virgin, copiously engender pictorial and textual proof-images, as the

³⁷ 'Candor est enim lucis aeternae et speculum sine macula Dei maiestatis et imago bonitatis illius [...]. et enim haec speciosior sole et super omnem stellarum dispositionem luci comparata inventitur prior'. Here and elsewhere in the series, Wierix also alludes to the Marian epithets enumerated in such complementary prayers as the *Litanien van onse lieve Vrouwe uyt die heylige Schrifture*, for which see De Pretere, *Handboekken* 200–203: in plate 7, for example, Mary is portrayed in the words of this litany, as the 'Mulier amicta sole' and as she who 'per gloriosam assumptionem tuam', liberates us from the death of sin, while in plates 3 and 4, she is the 'Mediatrix nostra' who frees us 'a cunctis periculis'.

³⁸ Richeome Louis, S.J., *Le pelerin de Lorete. Voeu à la glorieuse Vierge Marie Mere de Dieu* (Bordeaux, S. Millange: 1604; reprint Lyon, Pierre Rigaud: 1607), translated as *The Pilgrim of Loreto. Performing His Vow Made to the Glorious Virgin Mary Mother of God. Conteyning Divers Devout Meditations upon the Christian & Cath. Doctrine*, trans. E. Worsley (Paris n.p.: 1629), in Rogers D.M., *English Recusant Literature* 285 (Ilkley – London: 1976) 35. On the *Pelerin de Lorete*, see Fabre P.-A., "Lieu de mémoire et paysage spirituel: les jardins du noviciat de Sant'Andrea del Quirinale selon la Peinture spirituelle de Louis Richeome", in Mosser M. – Nys P. (eds.), *Les jardins, art et lieu de mémoire* (Besançon: 1995) 135–148. On the literary context for Richeome's imagery of virtual pilgrimage, see Williams W., *Pilgrimage and Narrative in the French Renaissance: "The Undiscovered Country"* (Oxford – New York: 1998).

thousands of votive images and tablets to be seen at Loreto further attest. The Jesuit Richeome based this claim on data assembled in the chronicle *Lauretanae historiae libri quinque*, written by Orazio Torsellino, former rector of the Jesuit College of Loreto, who singles out the shrine and its cult above all others for the richness of miraculous proofs that visibly testify to the sacred presence of Mary and Jesus. I quote from the early English translation of Thomas Price:

Which continual miracles of the House of Loreto, are so evident, that albeit others were wanting, as they abound; yet these alone might make sufficient proove to any creature, of the presence of Almighty God: in so much that there is none (though desperat & wicked) but if he visit the house of Loreto may not easily perceive Almighty God to be present with his B. Mother, in his Mothers little House. This is speciall and proper to the Church of Loreto, to have her religion and sanctitie to florish every day more and more, which may easily appeare in comparison of other famous Churches, either of our B. Lady or els of other Saints. For when their celebritie and reverence hath florished for a certaine time, we know that it hath diminished by litle and litle: but by the space of so many ages, we evidently see, that because the maiestie of this Church, is grounded on most firme foundations, it doth daily become more glorious and more holy.³⁹

His *History of Our Blessed Lady of Loreto* doubles as a virtual pilgrimage to this holiest of places, that stirs up veridical images of Mary's numberless intercessions and merciful interventions. These are freely given even if one visits the shrine not 'with corporall presence [...] but in spirit only', as Price remarks in his translator's preface.⁴⁰ Torsellino's description of the images this meditative journey evokes, transfers easily to Wierix's series with its frequent references to the Litany of

³⁹ Torsellino, *History of Our Blessed Lady of Loreto* (see note 11), fol. A3r-v. On Torsellino, see Jouvancy J. de, *Historiae S.I. pars quinta, tomus posterior, ab anno Christi MDXCI. ad MDCXVI* (Rome, G. Plachi: 1710) 821–822; Hoefer J.C.F. (ed.), *Nouvelle biographie générale*, 46 vols. (Paris: 1853–1866) vol. XLV 509–510; Sommervogel C., S.J. (ed.), *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 11 vols. (Brussels: 1890–1932) VIII 138–157; Koch L., *Jesuiten-Lexikon. Die Gesellschaft Jesu einst und jetzt* (Paderborn: 1934) 1763; Höfer J. – Rahner K. (eds.), *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 10 vols. (Freiburg, 1957–65) X 259; Nedermeyer U., "Das katholische Geschichtslehrbuch des siebzehnten Jahrhunderts: Orazio Torsellini, *Epitome historiarium*", *Historisches Jahrbuch* 108 (1988) 469–483; and Zanfredini M., "Torsellino (Torsellini), Orazio", in O'Neill, C.E., S.J., and Domínguez J.M., S.J. (eds.), *Diccionario histórico de la Compañía de Jesús*, 4 vols. (Rome – Madrid: 2001) IV 3827.

⁴⁰ "To the Most Glorious, and Most B. Virgin of Loreto", in Torsellino, *History of Our Blessed Lady of Loreto*, fol. *8r.

Loreto: ‘there is scarce any History of this kind, more famous for miracles, richer for examples, more frequent for practice, or pleasanter for profit. For heere may you behold the divers and manifold protections of the B. Virgin of Loreto. Here most of her miracles and wonders, laid before you in a worthy monument: from whence you may intreate helpe for your selfe, for your familie and Cittie; for the diversitie of times as need shall require’.⁴¹ That the *Maria* should be construed as just such a virtual pilgrimage, more specifically, as the exemplary spiritual journey of Johannes Malderus, becomes all the more likely when we consider that the shrine of Loreto was deemed indistinguishable from Mary herself: ‘Moreover Almighty God hath inspired into the hartes of mortall men, such devotion towards the place, that whosoever come to the house of Loreto seeme not so much to come to the house of the Virgin, as to the B. Virgin herself’.⁴² We might put this as follows: entitled *Maria*, the series strives to make her present in the way she becomes present to the pilgrim, both actual and virtual, at the House of Loreto, where guided by the Loretan Litany, he feels her presence and discerns her multifaceted intercessory personae. As at Loreto, so here, her many miracles are translated into proof-images, or perhaps it would be truer to say that she can be seen as the intercessory source of these votive images and texts, which seem to arise from the central scenes they complement. The brightness of these visionary scenes is like the ‘beame of heavenly light’, brighter than the ‘sunne that shineth in the brightest summers day’, that illuminates the Loretan pilgrims who visit the shrine in body or spirit, as Price avers.⁴³ The rosary, a kind of visual ‘booke without words or letters’, is an essential part of the Loretan pilgrimage, as Richeome argues, for its rhythm and pattern ensure that order, number, and measure preside over the pilgrim’s progress.⁴⁴

The pictorial schemata would seem to correspond to the meditative program outlined in Book I of Richeome’s *Pilgrime of Loreto*. In the chapter “Of Prayer, Meditation, and Contemplation”, he defines meditation as a discursive practice that aims to apprehend some divine subject, ‘noting the causes and effects, and deducing conclusions agreeable

⁴¹ “The First Booke of the History of Loreto: [...] The Preface”, in ibidem, fol. A2v.

⁴² Ibidem, fols. A2v–A3r.

⁴³ “To the Godly Reader”, in ibidem, fol. **4v.

⁴⁴ Richeome, *The Pilgrime of Loreto* 54.

to the honour of God, and our good'.⁴⁵ After a brief general prayer, the meditation proper begins with a first preamble, that adapts the Ignatian technique of the *compositio loci*: the votary fashions a mental image of the place inhabited by the meditative subject, in order better to grasp the subject's lineaments and operations.⁴⁶ Richeome makes clear that he uses the term 'subject' to signify a mystery of faith. But if the subject is spiritual, such as a virtue or a point of doctrine, we must instead represent it in the 'manner of a parable', clothing it in a representable form.⁴⁷ Richeome offers up 'sinne' as an example: 'as if we meditate upon sinne, we may imagine the soule shut up, and imprisoned within the body, as in an obscure and loathsome prison; and sinne, as a cruell and monstrous tyrant, a dragon, a serpent, and such as the Divell is painted, and all the holy Doctours doe sometymes describe it'.⁴⁸ It is clear from all this, as Pierre-Antoine Fabre, Judy Loach, and Jeffrey Chipps Smith have observed, that Richeome's meditative program, here as elsewhere, is anchored in images, and moreover, that such mental images are pictorial in form and effect.⁴⁹ Indeed, he advises those readers whose imaginative faculty proves insufficiently inventive, that they may find it useful to place before the eyes 'some picture or image of the matter we meditate, which may serve instead of these representations, to them that cannot frame this themselves'.⁵⁰ The function of the first preamble, he adds, is to focus the attention by settling or restraining the imagination, which he characterizes in Augustinian terms, as a 'flying and wandering faculty, going for the most part out of the house without leave, & carrying our thoughts sometymes before they are aware, as far from the marke, or matter, as the North is from the South'.⁵¹

⁴⁵ Ibidem 49.

⁴⁶ As described in the subsequent chapter, "How Prayer Should Be Made, and of the Partes, and Use Thereof", in ibidem 51.

⁴⁷ Ibidem.

⁴⁸ Ibidem 51–52.

⁴⁹ Fabre, "Lieu de mémoire et paysage spiritual"; Chipps Smith, *Sensuous Worship* 50–52; and Loach J., "An Apprenticeship in Seeing: Richeome's *La Peinture spirituelle*", in Melion W.S. – Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni-Bruslé A. (eds.), *Ut pictura meditatio: The Meditative Image in Northern Art, 1500–1700* (Turnhout: forthcoming).

⁵⁰ Richeome, *The Pilgrime of Loreto* 52.

⁵¹ Ibidem.

There follows a brief petitionary prayer, and then the meditative ‘body or corps’, that consists of the points to be meditated: ‘one, two, three, or more: as if meditating of the Resurrection of our Saviour, we should make the first point of the tyme or houre of his rysing, the second of the glory of his body, the third of the souldiers feare that kept the Sepulcher, the fourth of the apparition and testimony of the Angells, and so in other matters’.⁵² We might call this a joint fleshing-out and parsing-up of the image promulgated in the first preamble, and now subjected to closer scrutiny. The body of the meditation leads to what Richeome christens a ‘speech’, that is, an affective conversation between the soul and its maker, in which the votary renders thanks, offers service, begs for the pardon of sins and the grace of amendment, and rehearses what it has come to understand about the meditative subject.⁵³ Finally, having discoursed upon the ‘mervailous workes of God’, his ‘will warmed by love’, his ‘soul caste [...] into the armes of [the Creator’s] holy providence’, he ascends by the grace of God from meditation to contemplation of the subject at hand.⁵⁴ This is an experience of heightened presence, still based in sight, but attentively intensified and thoroughly known in the act of beholding: ‘Contemplation is a regard of the eyes of the soule fastened attentively upon some obiect, as if after having meditated of the creation, she should set her eye of her understanding fast and fixed upon the greatness of God, upon the beauty of the Heavens; or having discoursed of the passion of our Saviour, she behouldeth him present, & seeth him crucifyed, and without any other discourse persevereth constantly in this spectacle’.⁵⁵ This contemplative clarity circles back upon meditation, transforming it into a ‘cleere knowledge’, whose parts, having been meditatively (viz., discursively) parsed, are all at once sewn into a seamless whole, understood without discourse: ‘Then the soule doth contemplate upon her meditation: [...] For the understanding having attentively, and with many reasons to and fro meditated the mystery, and gathered divers lights togeather, doth frame unto herself a cleere knowledge, wherof without further discourse, one way or other, she enjoyeth (as I may say) a vision which approacheth to the knowledge

⁵² Ibidem. Richeome visualizes the Resurrection to demonstrate how the ‘body or corps of the prayer’ is elaborated.

⁵³ Ibidem.

⁵⁴ As described in “Of Prayer, Meditation, and Contemplation”, in *ibidem* 49.

⁵⁵ *Ibidem* 49–50.

of Angels, who understand without discourse'.⁵⁶ Whereas meditation is like the reading of a book sentence by sentence, or the chewing of food piece by piece, contemplation is pleasurable not laborious, like 'casting the eyes upon a picture, discerning all at once'.⁵⁷ Given that this account hinges on the act of viewing images, it might be more accurate to compare meditation to the reading of an image in parts, starting from the setting; contemplation to the seeing of the image as a whole into which these parts are altogether subsumed.

The *Maria* can be viewed as the practical application of this programmatic apparatus. The title-print gives the place: Antwerp, and within this place another place – the soul of Johannes Malderus, understood as the *locus* where the mediatrix Mary dwells [Fig. 1]. The angelic chorus adumbrates the contemplative image of Maria Mediatrix to be secured through meditation on her virtues and privileges, as enumerated in the *Salve*, *Litania Loretana*, and *Rosarium*. The series of seven prints then applies a fixed organizational schema: since the meditative subject – Mary's virtues as enunciated in the *Salve* – is spiritual not historical, the image provides a parabolic armature whence we may proceed [Figs. 2–8]. In plate 1, as we have seen, this is the installation of Mary as heavenly mediatrix, visualized as a coronation scene enacted by the Holy Trinity [Fig. 2]. If this image vividly envisions her as *Regina*, it also describes her as *Mater misericordiae*, for her face and hands can be seen to express not only joy and wonder, but also entreaty and supplication. The image now requires to be pointed, that is, read by reference to its constituent yet subsidiary parts, 'noting the causes, and effects, and deducing conclusions agreeable to the honor of [Mary], and our good'.⁵⁸ These points are illustrated in the four roundels attached to the rosary, this scheme implying that they are to be considered in sequence, as specific instances, or better, effects of Mary's status as queen and merciful mother. As we examine this relation between central and corollary scenes, we ascertain the further relation of cause and effect between the *Salve*'s designation of Mary as *Regina* and *Mater misericordiae* and the *Litania*'s designation of her as *Regina prophetarum*, *Regina apostolorum*, *Regina martyrum*, and *Regina confessorum*. By stages, we learn how and why she is so great a

⁵⁶ Ibidem 50. As an example, Richeome cites Moses who, 'having seene the vision of the burning Bush', approached and 'discours[ed] why it consumed not'.

⁵⁷ Ibidem.

⁵⁸ Ibidem 49.

mediatrix – an intercessor before whom other intercessors, the virgin martyrs and Saint Joseph pictured in the oval below, intercede on our behalf. And, if God allows, we may finally be granted a contemplative view of the whole, in which the parts cohere into a unified entirety that reveals the true mystery of the Virgin's regal humility, or again, of her humble royalty, that begets sovereign mercy. As Richeome states, contemplation issues from and redounds back upon meditation: so, having gained these insights, we will wish to scrutinize their connection to the episcopal votary, as symptoms of his adept soul, in which these meditative parts are known to lodge.

Let us turn now to the question of execution, asking how the very fine rendering of these prints supports their meditative form and function. Or again, what is the hermeneutic function of the engraver's extraordinarily refined technique? Both Richeome and Torsellino provide answers to these questions. Richeome celebrates angelic artifice as one of the defining properties of the House of Loreto, comparing it in this respect to the Temple of Solomon: 'this royall building of the Temple being the most accomplished and perfected, in all varietie of the parts and workmanship, and the most stately & costly in the matter that ever was; & the novelty of this wonder had beene incredible, if the Scripture it selfe did not warrant us'.⁵⁹ Yet, the House of Loreto transcends this astonishing building, not in its materials or construction, 'finished by the common artizans of Nazareth', but in the manner of its miraculous transportation by angels from Galilee to Dalmatia, thence to two sites in Recanati, and finally to its resting place in Loreto. Richeome regards this transmigration of the shrine as a mode of angelic artisanship, that confers upon it a double pedigree of artifice:

For if the Angells had built it where it is, or els where as it is, it had beene wonderfull by reason of the workemen, but not of the worke, which might have beene made by the industry of men, as it was at the first: but being transported from the first seate [...] it is made admirable both by the workmen, and the manner of the worke; this transporting and transplanting exceeding all the power and industry of all the Enginiers and Builders in the world, though they had the handes of a hundred *Briareuses* (one of the hundred-handed Hecatonchires), & of a hundred *Archimedeses*: and therefore we may say, that this Chappell is builded with such miracles, as never any bulding was before, and that

⁵⁹ Ibidem 4.

in this respect it was the most noble peece of worke that ever worldly eyes beheld.⁶⁰

Such ‘changes and removes’ make the house ‘more certaine and admirable’, as well as ‘more great and famous’, rousing faith in the power of God to effect any miracle, and impelling a ‘world of people [...] to feed their eyes with the sight thereof’.⁶¹ The very presence of the house is regarded as an index of the supreme artifice that allows it to be visited in this place. The simplicity of its human fashioning – its humble and humbly worked stones, plaster, and timbers – heightens by antithesis the ‘mervaile’ of angelic fashioning to be discerned at Loreto.⁶² Indeed, the artifice here evident surpasses the human faculty of imagination, and must consequently be seen to be believed: ‘for first it seemeth impossible, that it should come by the fantasy of men to have found the meanes of this transport, being without example both before and after [...]. Therefore as any such like thing was never heard of, so neither could it (speaking morally) enter into the thought of any man to fayne or devise, or to further it, if it were not true’.⁶³ So artifice is part and parcel of the cult of Loreto, and seen in these terms, the uncommon artifice of the *Maria* operates as a simile of the divine artifice made manifest at the pilgrimage site.

If as Richeome avers, the Loretan pilgrimage is partially driven by the desire to see at first hand the divine artifice resonant in the shrine, this distinctive quality will become all the more apparent if the pilgrim views it as the acme of paradox. The House of Loreto thus becomes a

⁶⁰ Ibidem 5–6.

⁶¹ Ibidem 8–9.

⁶² Ibidem 5: ‘The chamber or house of Loreto hath beene honoured in this kinde above all the houses that ever were in the world; not in respect of the first building, which was finished by the common artizans of Nazareth; nor for that it was beautified with a goodly Temple, which *Helena* the mother of *Constantine* caused to be built hard-by, but in that it hath beene transported by the Angells from one country to another, and from one place to another in the same country, and consequently so often built with miracles never heard off before, and much greater then if it had beene built by the Angells themselves, that transported it’. So, it is the layering of angelic upon human artifice, the former common, the latter extraordinary, that distinguishes the house of Loreto. Richeome adduces the angelic transports as instruments of knowledge; see ibidem 8–9: ‘For first the mervaile hath beene thereby better knowne and averred, and is more great and famous by these manifold transports never heard of before, being removed in so divers places, in the sight of many people and in short tyme, from Asia into Europe, from one coast to another, and all this in places neere one to another, and in short space, to wit, from 1291’.

⁶³ Ibidem 20.

visual 'heavenly instruction' of the workings of the divine will, which has the power to make transitory things (a Nazarene dwelling) immortal (the Loretan shrine), little things (a mere chamber) great (the locus of the Annunciation).⁶⁴ This paradoxical artifice serves most importantly to announce the incomparably 'true work of the selfe same very Trinity', the mystery of the Incarnation, in which God finally gives himself to be seen in his son, the author of the new dispensation:

The vision of *Jacob* was but a shaddow in respect of this, as also was the burning Bush: and that of *Sinai*, where God gave his Law, and let him selfe be seene only in smoke, and lightning, and heard only by a voice framed in the ayre, and by the sound of Trumpet: heere he gave his Sonne the author of the law to make himselfe be seene in him, to speake by his word, and by him to give the Law, and salvation to mortall men; and let his Angells appeare in the most beautiful forme that ever they were seen in, worthily to announce the mystery of all mysteries.⁶⁵

For Richeome, the House of Loreto not only marks the threshold between the Old Law and the New, it enshrines all the figurations of the Incarnation to be found in the Old Testament, enclosing this vast scope of prophetic images within the compass of a little chamber. The paradox of the large in small is therefore the chiefest work of artifice made visible by divine fiat at Loreto:

And this divine Chamber, having beene the House, and Closet wherein it was performed, doth it not comprise in it selfe the very maiesty of all the remarkable thinges and places of the old Testament, all which did figure, and had relation to this Incarnation? Hat it not more honour in it, then if it had beene a Temple with a thousand altars, or an altar of a thousand sacrifices? More then the mountaines of *Moria* & *Thabor*?

⁶⁴ Ibidem 25. As Richeome makes clear, the antitheses brought together by the holy house operate visually: 'yea I may boldly say in the whole world, wherein it giveth us, (without saying a word) a heavenly instruction, giving us to know, that when God will, transitory and fading things can exceed the boundes and lawes of tyme, and become immortal, maugre death, according as they are consecrated to the service of him, who giveth beginning and lasting to all things'.

⁶⁵ Ibidem 28. Richeome calls the Incarnation that 'true work of the selfe same very Trinity', announced figuratively by the angel Gabriel; and he states that the Annunciation, which took place in the holy house, fulfills the action of divine artifice first revealed at the Creation (ibidem 27): 'But heer [Scripture] declareth it in expresse termes, to signify some thing extraordinary, even as it telleth us, that God when he would make man, sayd: *Let us make man to our similitude and likenes*, to teach us, say Devines, by these wordes of deliberation, that it was a higher & worthier worke, then the creation of other things, where God did not use this ceremonious language: although he made them all with wisdome and prudence'.

Then the valley of *Terebinthus?* of S. Johns desert? Or finally, then all the places in the world, honoured with any token or signe of divinity put togeather? O little Chamber, more capable at that tyme then the whole world, enclosing with thy walles the Virgin that was great with him, whome the largenes and capacity of the Heavens could not comprehend: a Chamber more rich, then all the Princely palaces that ever were, contayining the endles treasure of felicity: a chamber more cleere and bright then the day, having in thy bosome the glorious morning, and true Sunne?⁶⁶

The pertinence of this account to the *Maria* is no less beautiful for being obvious: matters of incalculable price are comprised by these small images, minutely worked, that pay homage to various aspects of Mary's divine and human relation to Christ, her son and her God. Within their diminutive compass they represent momentous heavenly mysteries. That they visualize texts and images of three succinct prayers and prayer sequences, within which the full spectrum of Marian mysteries is compressed, further emphasizes the paradox of the large in small that the series sets evocatively in motion. Another context for this prayerful dynamic may be discovered in Richeome's conception of meditation as an artisanal *machina* that refashions the soul, restoring its likeness to the *Deus Artifex* that first fashioned it in his image; like any instrument of artifice, meditative prayer must be manipulated with the utmost skill, its component parts masterfully handled: 'and therefore it is altogether necessary to understand it well, and to know how to use and handle it with dexterity; which he shall doe by the proper definition thereof, as it were by a toole or instrument, which discovereth the nature of the thing, and by declaration of the parts, conditions, and use thereof'.⁶⁷

In fact, Wierix places a premium on handling: he elicits the theme of dexterity, which is bound up with that of smallness; focusing attention on the process of diminution, he places smaller images (the roundels) within the already small pictures. The roundels, as we have seen, function as exempla of Marian intercessions, that elaborate upon the central scene by supplying specific illustrations of her Loretan praises. In a kind of rhetorical paradox, they are both pictorial reductions and titular amplifications of Mary's stature as mediatrix. Framing elements – rosary beads, inscribed borders, strapwork casements – declare indeed

⁶⁶ Ibidem 34.

⁶⁷ Ibidem 47–48.

enhance the pictorial status of the Marian scenes, making the viewer intensely aware of their skillful manufacture, even as the minuteness of execution causes the constituent hatches to merge into tonal fields, masking the linear traces of engraving. Rendering becomes virtually indistinguishable to the naked eye, but precisely for this reason, the eye seeks to detect it. It is as if Wierix were at one and the same time magnifying and yet effacing the process that brings these images to light. Viewed through the lens of Richeome's treatise, these effects operate as visual prompts, calling forth the meditative artifice that dexterously pictures the Virgin's praises, rendering the paradox of largeness in smallness that stands ultimately for the mystery of the Incarnation. These effects can also be understood by reference to Torsellino, who argues in the *History of the B. Lady of Loreto*, that the compact precinct and circuit of the shrine yet encompasses the limitless paradise of salvation, 'declaring unto us the rare wonders and mercies of Almighty God, who by his only will doth make mortall things immortall in a sort for ever'.⁶⁸ What seems at first bounded proves grandly unbounded, a palpably visual similitude of the Virgin's womb that enclosed the Lord God, the 'sacred fountaine of life itself'.⁶⁹ Torsellino directly addresses the issue of the relation between divine and human artifice, implicitly providing just cause for Wierix's double gesture of showing and not showing his linear means, the indices of his virtuosity. He does this in an anecdote about the architect Nerusio, who was charged with the task of opening new doorways into the holy house. Setting about the job 'with greater confidence in his art, then reverence to the place', he was struck down for displaying 'to[o] much confidence in him selfe', and devoting too little attention to the ornamentation and adornment of the Virgin.⁷⁰ By contrast, the sculptor Sansovino, commissioned by Leo X to produce a bozzetto of the sculptural program to be built around the shrine, 'conceived [...] so sumptuous an ornament, as might well beseeme the B. Virgin Mother of God, the Roman Bishop the vicar of Christ, and the maiestie and religion of the place it selfe, as far forth as the imbecillity and weaknes

⁶⁸ "To the most Glorious, and most Blessed Virgin of Loreto, the most mercifull Patronesse, and greatest Ioy of Christians", in Torsellino, *History of Our Blessed Lady of Loreto*, fol. *6r.

⁶⁹ Ibidem, fol. *6v.

⁷⁰ Ibidem 203–204.

of man could attaine unto'.⁷¹ In service to Mary of Loreto, he demonstrates that 'in a small subiect he might happily excell all the magnificence of his time'.⁷² This anecdote suggests that the trope of the large in small, and the allied figure of retiring virtuosity, as magnificent as it is diminutive, were the common currency of Loretan devotion upon which Wierix drew.

Torsellino's lengthy treatise dwells especially on two further expressions of Marian devotion that can be seen to underwrite Wierix's application of the fine style in the *Maria*. Throughout the *History* he repeatedly calls attention to diligence and curiosity as attributes of pious dedication to the Marian cult of Loreto. The sculptural program of Sansovino is one of many examples: it begins with Leo, who emulates his predecessor Julius, who had 'us[ed] all diligence to finish and adorne the House of *Loreto*';⁷³ like Julius, Leo proves 'diligent to finish the worke' of ornamenting Mary and her house, sparing no expense to ensure that the project 'happily excell all the magnificence of his time'.⁷⁴ In turn, Clement VII, 'using all diligence to adorne the House of *Loreto*', spares no effort 'to finish that worthy Crust of the carved worke, which (as the beginnings made shew) was not unlikely to be the most curious worke of the whole world'.⁷⁵ When the monument is finally unveiled by Paul III, as an epitome of papal reverence for the House of Loreto, it is praised for the 'new and magnificant workmanship therof [...] yet never equalled in like quantity', for the 'statuae, lively wrought, & foure brazen leaves curiously engraven', for the Carrara marble 'of great beautie, and notably graced with striged Pillars, of *Corinth* worke', for the 'fascia of *Lucullun* marble [...] curiously wrought', for the 'carved scutchions, set forth with great art and skill', for the 'Porphyry-tables of excellent workmanship', for the reliefs 'admirable carved in embossed Images', for the architrave adorned with 'fruit-workes, as stalkes of apples and other fruities of admirable

⁷¹ Ibidem 178. So exceptional is Sansovino's frieze that it transcends the power of the imagination, requiring to be seen before it can be conceived; see ibidem 240: 'a work verily worth the beholding, whose exceeding beautie none can conceive in mind, that hath not seen it before with his eyes'.

⁷² Ibidem 178.

⁷³ Ibidem 167.

⁷⁴ Ibidem 178.

⁷⁵ Ibidem 207, 209. Torsellino also observes with regard to the sculptural ornamentation, that Clement wished it to be 'curiously finished, according to the dignitie thereof' (200).

workmanship', etc.⁷⁶ (It is worth noting that the work was still ongoing, and that the appearance of finish was itself an exceptionally skillful artifice, as Torsellino observes: 'yet was it brought to that passe, that it might seeme as finished').⁷⁷ He concludes as follows, taking it for granted that curious and diligent workmanship not only testify to the patrons' fervent piety, but also inspire fresh waves of pilgrimage to lap upon Loreto, for as the sacred place requires urgently to be seen, so too does this monument:

I think it not a thing worth the labour, to describe it with more wordes, seeing it may be seene. A work verily worth the beholding, whose exceeding beautie none can conceive in mind, that hath not seen it before with his eyes. Wherfore assoone as it was spread abroad, that the most admirable ornament of the sacred Cell was opened, forthwith great concourse of Inhabitants & strangers, was made to *Loreto*. For of purpose the workmen did use all diligence, to keepe close the frame of that curious ornament with coverings untill it was finished, that people might behold it with greater admiration & maiestie, when the fresh & entire beautie of the finished worke should come newlie to their eyes. And with this incomparable sight, and most excellent for proportion and curiositie, all men did earnestlie delight, both eyes and mind.⁷⁸

The monument having been dedicated, Loreto now shines with the two chiefest wonders of artifice anywhere to be seen, the 'one of divine power' (the House of Loreto and the mysteries it enfolds), the 'other of humane art' (the papal commission encasing the shrine).⁷⁹ With regard to the architectural work of shoring up the basilica, Torsellino asseverates that pilgrims sought to assist in the building works, their 'diligence [...] forward[ing] the endeavour of the masons, and of the Architects'.⁸⁰ On this account, just as curiosity or workmanship inspires the pilgrims' curiosity piously to behold Loreto, so the pilgrims' diligence corresponds to that of the artisans who endeavor to beautify the shrine.

Torsellino pays special attention to engraved donaries, such as the golden cross given by Maximiliana, daughter of the Duke of Bavaria,⁸¹

⁷⁶ Ibidem 238–239.

⁷⁷ Ibidem 237–238.

⁷⁸ Ibidem 240.

⁷⁹ Ibidem 242.

⁸⁰ Ibidem 243.

⁸¹ Ibidem 431–432.

the admirable bronze panels given by Sixtus V,⁸² the very curiously worked silver gilt casket given by the Viceroy of Naples's consort,⁸³ the curiously and richly wrought silver ewer given by Hieronyma Spinola,⁸⁴ or the excellently fashioned vessels adorned with scenes from the Virgin's life, the one holding a silver lily, the other a golden sprig of roses, given by Scipio Spinelli, Duke of Seminario.⁸⁵ After the popes, Wilhelm V, Duke of Bavaria, Christina, Grand Duchess of Tuscany, and the Vice-Countess Justina receive the greatest attention and praise for their donaries. Especially noteworthy is Wilhelm's gift of a 'little book of solid gold, which being divided three manner of wayes, in foure leaves, seemeth to containe beautifull pictures and Images wrought in precious stone'.⁸⁶ Exceedingly beautiful, these tiny lapidary images, in which 'art seem[s] to contend with the value of the thing it self', delight the beholder's eyes, scarcely surpassed by any other Loretan treasures, but nearly matched by a golden image of the risen Christ, glittering with diamonds and carbuncles. Collapsing artifice into devotion, Torsellino calls these donaries the 'exceeding piety of the Duke of *Bavaria*'.⁸⁷

The splendid gifts of Christina, Grand Duchess of Tuscany, are likewise equated with her 'fervent desire to see and reverence our B. Lady'.⁸⁸ She presents altar cloths and priestly vestments, 'curled three manner of waies with gold & silver, of admirable workmanship and art', along with linen excellently embroidered all-over with images of prophets, sibyls, apostles, and evangelists, as well as flowers and boughs, about which Torsellino avows rarely if ever to have seen anything more curious, precious, or wonderful in this kind.⁸⁹ In his formulation, the diligence and curiosity of workmanship evident in these gifts exactly coincide with the singular devotion of Christina's soul, shown when she refused to enter the holy house until she had confessed and taken holy communion, then having gone inside, knelt in attentive prayer for hours at a time, on three consecutive days, seeming more to dwell

⁸² Ibidem 472.

⁸³ Ibidem 476.

⁸⁴ Ibidem 510.

⁸⁵ Ibidem 506.

⁸⁶ Ibidem 449.

⁸⁷ Ibidem 450.

⁸⁸ Ibidem 514.

⁸⁹ Ibidem 514–515.

in the church than merely to visit it. As Torsellino puts it: 'Like magnificence corresponded to these tokens of piety'.⁹⁰

Even more astonishing is the sumptuous gift of the Vice-Countess Justina, sewn it would seem by her own hand. The close attention Torsellino pays to devotional artifice culminates in his deft – one is tempted to say dexterous – portrayal of this expertly wrought donary, mixing gold, silver, and silken threads, fabricated in a new way. Borrowing the calligrapher's terminology, he describes it as flourished with new and admirable workmanship:

For the worke it self being laid on no ground nor direction, is wrought with the needle, with continued & intermingled threeds of gold, silver, & silke of divers colours, void spaces left betweene, commonly called A point in the aire. A worke of secret skill, and almost of infinite labour. For the ornatuer wherof we speake, being made for the Altar, and also of the said worke, contayneth the XV. Mysteries of the Rosary of our B. Lady, very curiously expressed within square spaces; wherof every other is adorned with great flowres, as it were of Checker-worke, and that these voide spaces might not be unfilled, all the ornatuer is stitched with twisted silver: which truly (if we believe the report) was not only the gift of the *Vice-count*, a most worthy Matron, but also her owne worke; which may very well be, considering that there are many gifts of other noble women, which themselves did also worke, specially veiles for Chalices, & attire for our B. Lady.⁹¹

I have dwelt at such length on Torsellino's artisanal rhetoric because it provides so pertinent a frame of reference for Wierix's print series, fashioned as exceptionally with the burin as were Justina's rosary images with needle and thread [Figs. 1–8]. So too, like Wilhelm's miniature effigy of a golden book, his beautifully wrought prints enclose further delightful images. And like Christina's gifts, these prints, identified as specimens of the engraver's devotion ('aeternum Devotus Dicabat, faciebat'), attest the diligent and curious artifice with which he invests his Loretan donary [Fig. 1]. There is a parallel construction tacitly at work here: as Wierix's art evinces his devotion to Malderus, so it serves to evince Malderus's devotion to Mary. Wierix adds a delicate conceit to this imagery of artisanal piety: by conferring these prints on Malderus, he cedes property over these donaries to the bishop, effectively making them the bishop's exquisite gifts to the

⁹⁰ Ibidem 514.

⁹¹ Ibidem 510–511.

Virgin. This is to say that the *Maria* purports to substitute for gifts like those of Wilhelm, Christina, and Justina; as such, it serves to reify the exceeding piety of Johannes Malderus, votary of the Blessed Lady of Loreto, proponent of the *Salve* and the Rosary, and member of the Latin Sodality of Our Dear Lady. The pendant hearts suspended from the fictive corbels in the title-print can perhaps be said to support this claim, for they resemble in form and function the paired golden hearts commonly left at Loreto as love tokens, described on several occasions by Torsellino.⁹² Here they bear witness to Wierix's love for his bishop, appeal for a like show of affection, and evince their joint love for Mary, bride, mother, and mediatrix to Christ.

⁹² See, for example, his account of Ioanna of Austria, Duchess of Tuscany, who 'hung up two harts of gold in golden chaines, to be a monument, that she [i.e., Mary] was either most deare to her and her husband, or els that the B. Virgin, the author of concord, would make her husbands hart such a one unto her, as she knew hers to be unto him' (*ibidem* 412).

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SECRET WISDOM.
ANTOON WIERIX'S ENGRAVINGS OF A CARMELITE MYSTIC

James Clifton

Since this vision is among the most sublime [...],
there are no means by which those of us who know
little here below can explain it.

Teresa of Avila¹

Not only because of this inability to understand contemplation is it called 'secret' but also because of the effects it produces in the soul. The wisdom of love is not secret merely in the darknesses and straits of the soul's purgation (for the soul does not know how to describe it) but also afterwards in the illumination, when it is communicated more clearly. Even then it is so secret that it is ineffable. Not only does a man feel unwilling to give expression to this wisdom, but he finds no adequate means or similitude to signify so sublime an understanding and delicate a spiritual feeling.

John of the Cross²

I do not think anyone who has not had such experience will understand this well. But, since the soul experiencing this is aware that what she has so

¹ Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas. Edición manual* (4th ed., Madrid: 1974) 118–119 (*Libro de la Vida*, 27.3): ‘Ansí como es de las más subidas [...], ansí no hay términos para decirla acá las que poco sabemos, que los letrados mejor lo darán a entender’; trans. from Teresa of Avila, *Collected Works*, trans. K. Kavanaugh – O. Rodriguez, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C.: 1976), vol. III, 228.

² Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas*, ed. L. Ruano de la Iglesia (11th ed., Madrid: 1982) 398 (*Noche oscura*, 2.17.3): ‘Y no sólo por esto se puede llamar *secreta*, sino también por los efectos que hace en el alma, porque no solamente en las tinieblas y aprietos de la purgación, cuando esta sabiduría de amor purga el alma, es secreta para no saber decir de ella el alma nada, mas también después en la iluminación, cuando más a las claras se le comunica esta sabiduría, le es el alma tan secreta para decir y ponerle nombre para decirlo, que, demás de que ninguna gana le dé al alma de decirla, no halla modo ni manera ni simil que le cuadre para poder significar inteligencia tan subida y sentimiento espiritual tan delicado’. Trans. from Juan of the Cross, *The Collected Works of Saint John of the Cross*, trans. K. Kavanaugh – O. Rodriguez (Washington, D.C.: 1979) 368–369.

sublimely experienced remains beyond her understanding, she calls it 'I-don't-know-what'. Since it is not understandable, it is indescribable, although, as I say, one may know what the experience of it is.

– John of the Cross³

The height of divine experiences cannot be expressed in words.

– Juan de Jesús María⁴

Words cannot describe the mystic's experience. Can pictures do any better? How does one describe or depict that which occurs outside or beyond the senses? In order to be effective, attempts at such description and such depiction call upon the sensory apparatus of both the writer/artist and the reader/viewer, and doubly so: through the sight of words and images and through the memory of sensations like those adduced in the descriptions and depictions.⁵ Recourse – ultimately inadequate – is in most instances to metaphor and other figurative devices. In early modern devotional practice, all the senses were engaged, but writers consistently asserted that the purest experience of, or union with, God can occur only outside the senses because God, being uncircumscribable, cannot be fully apprehended through the senses.

Although the line of demarcation between the sometimes complementary practices of meditation and contemplation is not always clear, meditation may be seen as a mental image-making activity: the votary is encouraged and instructed to produce mental images of biblical history, and pictorial images in a variety of media may be useful as meditative prompts.⁶ Contemplation, or mystical theology – that is,

³ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 598 (*Cantico espiritual [B]*, 7.9): 'Esto creo no lo acabaré bien de entender el que no lo hubiere experimentado; pero el alma que lo experimenta, come ve que se le queda por entender aquello de que altamente siente, llámalo *un no sé qué*; porque así como no se entiende, así tampoco se sabe decir, aunque (como he dicho) se sabe sentir'. Trans. from Juan of the Cross, *Complete Works* 440. Cf. idem, *Obras completas* 722 (*Cantico espiritual [B]*, 39.3): 'que no hay decirlo por lengua mortal'.

⁴ Juan de Jesús María, *Theologia mystica*, ed. G. Strina (Brussels: 1993) 11 (*Canones*, 11): 'Divinarum affectionum altitudo verbis exprimi nequit'.

⁵ Likewise, verbal accounts engage the sense of hearing.

⁶ For the rapidly growing literature on meditative images, especially in the Netherlands, a good place to start is Melion W.S. – Dekoninck R. – Guiderdoni-Bruslé A. (eds.), *Ut pictura meditatio. The Meditative Image in Northern Art, 1500–1700*, Proetus: Studies in Early Modern Identity Formation 4 (Turnhout: 2011).

the secret wisdom of God, as Saint John of the Cross put it⁷ – aspires to an imageless indwelling of the spirit of God, though it too may make use of images, both pictorial and mental, on the path toward this goal. The pictorial images that I shall consider here are not images *for* meditation, but rather images *of* contemplation, and in that sense are analogous to attempts to describe verbally the experience of contemplation. Such images might be suggestive for those aspiring to contemplative experiences, but they would not act as direct prompts for such experiences.

This paper examines the seeming paradox of representing mystical states that eschew and even negate sensible representation, through an analysis of an unfinished series of engravings of a Carmelite mystic by Antoon III Wierix, datable to around 1620 [Figs. 1–5]. Any image (or text) attempting to reproduce a mystical experience is destined to failure; artist and viewer see through a glass, darkly, as it were. But Wierix's images were, I suggest, intended to serve a function that would not have been unwelcome to even the most 'aniconic' mystic, a function comparable to that of the discursive attempts by mystics like Saint Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross to describe what happens in contemplation.

The Engraved Series

The series consists of ten unnumbered engravings (two unfinished), each just over eleven centimeters in height by approximately seven centimeters in width. Nine are signed at the bottom: *Anton. Wierx fecit et excud. Cum Gratia et Priuilegio.*⁸ With the exception of one of the unfinished prints, each is subscribed by a two- or three-word title in Latin and six-line rhymed verses (double tercets) in both Latin and French. Each image shows a single Carmelite monk in large scale in (or hovering above) a landscape, which varies from plate to plate. There is no title page and no internal evidence for ordering the engravings in sequence. Further plates may have been planned for the series, but there is no direct evidence of what they might have been. It is also

⁷ See, for example, Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 148 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.8.6): 'sabiduría de Dios secreta'.

⁸ Except that the *Divini amoris intensio* carries the spelling *Wierix*.



Fig. 1. Antoon III Wierix, *Divinae Caligenis Ingressio*, ca. 1620. Engraving, 11.2 × 7.1 cm. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique.



Fig. 2. Antoon III Wierix, *Perfectionis Ascensio*, ca. 1620. Engraving, sheet: 11.1 x 6.8 cm. The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1951 (51.501.6427(4)). Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY.



Fig. 3. Antoon III Wierix, *Imaginaria Visio*, ca. 1620. Engraving, 11.4 × 7.0 cm. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique.



Fig. 4. Antoon III Wierix, *Intellectvalis Visio*, ca. 1620. Engraving, 11.3 × 6.8 cm. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique.



Fig. 5. Antoon III Wierix, *Amorosa Inebriatio*, ca. 1620. Engraving, sheet: 10.9 × 6.7 cm. The Elisha Whittelsey Collection, The Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 1951 (51.501.6427(1)). Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

possible that other plates for the series have not been recognized as such. Impressions are rare, as one would expect from an unfinished series.

In his mid-nineteenth-century catalogue of Wierix prints, Louis Alvin, who identified only seven of the engravings, called them *Les visions de S. Jean de la Croix*,⁹ but in 1961 Cécile Emond rejected this direct identification with John, describing the series circumspectly as ‘more exactly an imagery of the highest states of the mystical life, certainly inspired by the doctrine of the reformer, but without particular references to his life’,¹⁰ but even this may have gone too far in associating the series with this particular Carmelite mystic. The figure in the series, who is fairly consistent from one plate to the next, bears only a generic resemblance to the John of the Cross in two other engravings by Antoon III Wierix: a portrait and a depiction of his dialogue with a *Cristo portacroce* depicted on an altar.¹¹ Subsequent writers have, nonetheless, continued to associate the prints with John of the Cross, some more specifically adducing John’s *Cántico espiritual* as the putative basis of the series, and even proposing that the figure depicted is ‘the soul represented as John of the Cross himself’.¹² The series has,

⁹ Alvin L., *Catalogue raisonné de l'oeuvre des trois frères Jean, Jérôme et Antoine Wierix* (Brussels: 1866) 145, nos. 801–807; Porteman K., “Een emblematische voorstelling van het mystieke leven: de ‘Idea vitae teresianaæ’, c. 1686”, *Ons geestelijk erf* 48 (1974) 47 n. 5, added an eighth plate; and Florisoone M., *Jean de la Croix: Iconographie générale* (n.p.: 1975) 375–381, identified all ten. References in this essay to the Wierix engravings use the New Hollstein numbers in Ruyven-Zeman Z. van – Leesberg M. – Stock J. van der, *The Wierix Family, Part VII. Hollstein's Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700* 65 (Rotterdam: 2004) VII (abbreviated as NH).

¹⁰ Emond C., *L'Iconographie Carmélitaine dans les anciens Pays Bas*, 2 vols. (Brussels: 1961) 236: ‘plus exactement une imagerie des plus hauts états de la vie mystique, inspirée certes par la doctrine du réformateur, mais sans références particulières à sa vie’.

¹¹ Ruyven-Zeman van – Leesberg – Stock van der, *The Wierix Family* VII, 144; 146 (NH 1561 and 1563, respectively) (note the discontinuous hairline of the tonsure above the forehead in the latter). See also the engraving by Hieronymus Wierix, in which the *beatus* appears with the Crucified Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the Christ Child (Ruyven-Zeman van – Leesberg – Stock van der, *The Wierix Family* VII, 145 [NH 1562]).

¹² Ruyven-Zeman van – Leesberg – Stock van der, *The Wierix Family* VII, 138 (NH 1551–1560), who call the series “The Spiritual Song of the Carmelite John of the Cross” and include it in the section of Wierix works devoted to portrayals of saints. Mauquoy-Hendrickx M., *Les Estampes des Wierix conservées au Cabinet des Estampes de la Bibliothèque Royale Albert I^e: Catalogue raisonné* 2 (Brussels: 1979) 255, had referred to it less specifically as “Les étapes de l'ascension mystique,” while also associating it with the publication of John’s works (see below). The *Amicabilis desponsatio* (NH 1553) was republished in Paris as a portrayal of John of the Cross following his

however, no specific relationship with John's *Cántico espiritual* or, indeed, with any of his writings, at least that I have been able to find, nor is John named in any of the inscriptions.

Sustained attention has not been given to the iconography of the series, and none of the images has been connected to specific passages in any text, including any by John of the Cross. The formula implicitly propounded by Alvin (that is, male Carmelite + mystical imagery + ca. 1600 = John of the Cross) has been perpetuated with little or no comment. The presumed association with John has affected both the dating and attribution of the prints. Marie Mauquoy-Hendrickx attributed the plates to Antoon III Wierix (Antoine le jeune) rather than to his father, Antoon II, because the writings of John of the Cross were not published until 1619, long after Antoon II's death in 1604 but before the death of his son in 1624. And this latter's death at a young age, she surmises, accounts for the unfinished state of the series.¹³ She had intimated that the first publication, in French, of John's *Cantique* in 1622 provides a *terminus post quem*, a notion given more explicit expression in the relevant New Hollstein volume, where the prints are attributed to Antoon III and dated 1622–1624. If the prints are dissociated from the publication of John's writings (or, indeed, from John himself), then an attribution to Antoon II and a date before or in 1604 becomes conceivable. Such an attribution would, however, be unlikely because most of Antoon II's prints with a privilege, which is present here, also indicate the name of the granter, which is absent here.¹⁴ If we reject any connection with the 1622 publication of the *Cantique* but maintain the attribution to Antoon III, who was born in 1596, a slightly larger window of possibility opens: from the middle of the 1610s to 1624.

Putting aside claims that Wierix's series illustrates John of the Cross's *Spiritual Canticle*, we might turn to sundry other texts, not as the point-by-point basis for the series but as potential guides to understanding it. John's works remain pertinent, because he was not unaware of or unaffected by a mystical tradition, and Teresa of Avila's writings

canonization in 1726, and the *Divinae caliginis ingressio* (NH 1551) was apparently associated with John in the *Ichnographia emblematica* (see below n. 20).

¹³ Mauquoy-Hendrickx, *Les Estampes des Wierix* 255–256.

¹⁴ On disentangling the oeuvres of Antoon II and Antoon III, see Ruyven-Zeman Z. van, *The Wierix Family: Introduction and Guide to the Catalogue. Hollstein's Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts 1450–1700* 69, in collaboration with M. Leesberg, ed. J. van der Stock – M. Leesberg (Rotterdam: 2004) xxxii.

naturally suggest themselves. But the works of others – Carmelite or not – might also be useful. Among the Carmelites, one might consider various writings of Jerónimo Gracián, Teresa's spiritual director, the *Theologia Mystica* of Juan de Jesús María (1607), and works of Tomás de Jesús (1564–1627). Like Wierix's series, all these writings tap into a long tradition of mystical theology, repeating, nuancing, reorganizing, and reapportioning the same or similar material.¹⁵ The length and breadth of this tradition are suggested by Juan de Jesús María, who cites in his preface Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Tommaso Gallo (Vercellese), Jean Gerson, Denis the Carthusian, Teresa of Avila, and others.¹⁶ And to these we might add Bernardino de Laredo, Harphius, Hugh de Balma, and so on.

Ordering the prints in the series has proven equally problematic.¹⁷ Emond does not explicitly provide the rationale for her ordering, but it seems to be based on what she sees as increasing spiritualization, beginning with the *Divinae caliginis ingressio* [Fig. 1], in which 'The soul embraced by the fire of divine love is separated from earthly things,' and ending with the *Perfectionis ascensio* [Fig. 2] and 'passing beyond the human'.¹⁸ Emond's first plate became the last in Michel Florisoone's ordering, but the latter simply describes rather than interprets the individual prints and offers neither a justification for the ordering nor a suggestion of the meaning of the series. Mauquoy-Hendrickx did not follow Florisoone's ordering, returning the *Divinae caliginis ingressio* to the beginning of the series, but otherwise following neither Alvin nor Emond, and placing the unfinished and unnamed plate (which she calls *Le parfum du ciel*) at the end. Her ordering of the plates, as well as their titles, was, she says, suggested by a Carmelite, R.P. Louis-Marie, who, in turn, relied on the *Ichnographia emblematica triplicis ad Deum Tri-Num mysticae viae*, published in Augsburg

¹⁵ This is not to imply that there are not important differences among the mystics. For an account distinguishing 'monistic mysticism' (which would include John of the Cross) and 'theistic mysticism' (which would include Teresa of Avila) and the latter's implication for an emblem book by Otto van Veen, see Thöfner M., "Let your desire be to see God": Teresian Mysticism and Otto van Veen's *Amoris Divini Emblemata*, *Emblematica* 12 (2002) 83–103.

¹⁶ Juan de Jesús María, *Theologia mystica* 4–5 ("Praefatio," 4). On Juan de Jesús María, see Strina G., *La Theologia mistica del Ven. P. Giovanni di Gesù Maria Carmelitano Scalzo Calagorritano. Introduzione generale* (Brussels: 1993).

¹⁷ For the various proposed orderings, see the Appendix.

¹⁸ Emond, *L'Iconographie Carmélitaine* 236–227: 'L'âme embrasée par le feu de l'amour divin, est séparé des chose terrestres'; 'le dépassement de l'humain.'

in 1779.¹⁹ She further adduces the *Idea vitae teresianaæ* [Fig. 6], an illustrated spiritual manual for Discalced Carmelite novices published in Antwerp around 1686, from which the *Ichnographia emblematica* was derived.²⁰ Yet while both these publications, each of which consists of 101 plates, draw in small part on Wierix's series, neither corresponds closely to it, and the relevant plates in the later works – the exact number is unclear²¹ – do not, in fact, appear in the order of the Wierix plates as arranged by Mauquoy-Hendrickx. Her general rationale for the ordering is implied in the title she ascribes to the series: *Les étapes de l'ascension mystique*. In the New Hollstein volume, the Mauquoy-Hendrickx ordering is followed, and the series is said to depict 'the soul [...] experienc[ing] the stages of purification, illumination and mystic union with Christ'.²²

¹⁹ *Ichnographia emblematica triplicis ad Deum Tri-Unum mysticae viae, purgativaæ, illuminativaæ, unitivaæ: Splendoribus Sanctorum, virtutibus eorum, divinisque charismatibus illustrata, in quinque partes divisæ, quarum I. reprezentat sui cognitionem, II. sui mortificationem, III. virtutum acquisitionem, IV. mentalem orationem. V. Divinam contemplationem. A patribus Carmelitis Discalceatis Provinc*<iae>* Bavariae adorata* (Augsburg, Ignatius Verhelst: 1779). The work is available online at: <http://www.archive.org/details/ichnographiaembl00disc> (accessed 25 February 2011).

²⁰ *Idea vitae Teresianaæ iconibus symbolicis expressa, in quinque partes divisa. Prima figurat sui cognitionem, secunda sui mortificationem, tertia virtutum acquisitionem, quarta mentalem orationem, quinta divinam contemplationem* (Antwerp, Jacob Messens: n.d. [ca. 1686]). The work is available online at: http://digbijzcoll.library.uu.nl/lees_gfx.php?W=On&BoekID=014703 (accessed 25 February 2011). On the *Idea vitae Teresianaæ*, see Porteman, "Een emblematische voorstelling"; Sebastián López S., "Iconografía de la vida mística teresiana", *Boletín del Museo e Instituto "Camón Aznar"* 10 (1982) 15–68 (who publishes all the plates in the work); Wyhe C. van, "The *Idea Vitae Teresianaæ* (1687): The Teresian Mystic Life and its Visual Representation in the Low Countries", in Wyhe C. van (ed.), *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe. An Interdisciplinary View* (Aldershot: 2008) 173–207. On the *Ichnographia emblematica*, see Porteman, "Een emblematische voorstelling" 57–60. The *Ichnographia emblematica* transforms the generic Carmelite in plate 100 of the *Idea vitae Teresianaæ* (*Ingressus in Divinam Caliginem*), which was in turn a close copy (in reverse) of Wierix's *Divinae caliginis ingressio*, explicitly into a figure of John of the Cross by providing him a book that is inscribed *Obscura / nox / Animæ / Dunckele nacht der Seele*.

²¹ Only one of the plates in the *Idea vitae Teresianaæ*, the *Ingressus in divinam caliginem* (Plate 100), is a direct copy (in reverse) of a known Wierix plate, the *Divinae caliginis ingressio* (NH 1551). The plates in the *Ichnographia emblematica*, while corresponding in number, subject, and general composition with those in the *Idea*, are not copies and often substitute different protagonists, including biblical ones.

²² Ruyven-Zeman van – Leesberg – Stock van der, *The Wierix Family* VII, 138.

The Way of Perfection

Assuming that the Wierix series depicts successive steps or stages in a programmatic spiritual development is natural, given the persistent tendency of spiritual writers, including Carmelite, to describe the achievement of religious perfection or union with God in these terms. The *Idea vitae Teresiana* is, in fact, based on such stages, specified on the title-page [Fig. 6] (and structuring the book) as self-cognition, self-mortification, acquisition of virtue, mental prayer, and divine contemplation, which follow, more or less, the more traditional Pseudo-Dionysian concatenation of *via purgativa*, *via illuminativa*, and *via unitiva* (which are, in fact, also specified in the title of the *Ichnographia emblematica*).²³ But the Wierix prints correspond, whether specifically or generally, only to plates in the final section – on divine contemplation (plates 82–101) – of the *Idea vitae Teresiana* and do not therefore illustrate any of the preceding steps in a mystical process (certainly not that of purification [*via purgativa*]).²⁴

Even within the *via unitiva*, an ideal ordering is not self-evident. Those who have listed or ordered the Wierix plates have all, quite reasonably, placed the *Imaginaria visio* [Fig. 3] before the *Intellectualis visio* [Fig. 4] (sometimes separated by other plates), implying a progression or hierarchy based, presumably, on the tri-partite Augustinian division of *visio* into *visio corporalis*, *visio spiritualis* (or *imaginativa* [or, here, *imaginaria*]), and *visio intellectualis*, which emerged from his exegesis in *De Genesi ad litteram* of Paul's *raptus* (2 Cor. 12:2–4).²⁵ Teresa of Avila cites this schema, as well as the ascending order of “perfection” of the three types of *visio*, in describing her own visions.²⁶ Wieirx may well have intended this ordering of the two prints, but it is worth noting that Augustine's hierarchy does not necessarily imply a progression. He recognized that God could be known through all

²³ For the *via purgativa*, *via illuminativa*, and *via unitiva* specifically, see Gracián J. de la Madre de Dios, *Obras. I. Dilucidario – Mística teología – Oración mental – Vida del alma – Modo de proceder en la oración. Obras*, ed. S. de Santa Teresa, Biblioteca Mistica Carmelitana 15 (Burgos: 1932) 245–289 (*Mística teología*).

²⁴ *Divini amoris intensio* (NH 1559) bears some relationship to the *Amor Dei* of the *Idea vitae Teresiana* (plate 60) but probably represents a later (i.e., intensified) stage.

²⁵ See Newman F.X., “St. Augustine's Three Visions and the Structure of the *Commedia*”, *Modern Language Notes* 82,1 (1967) 58–61.

²⁶ Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas* 123 (*Libro de la Vida*, 28.4).

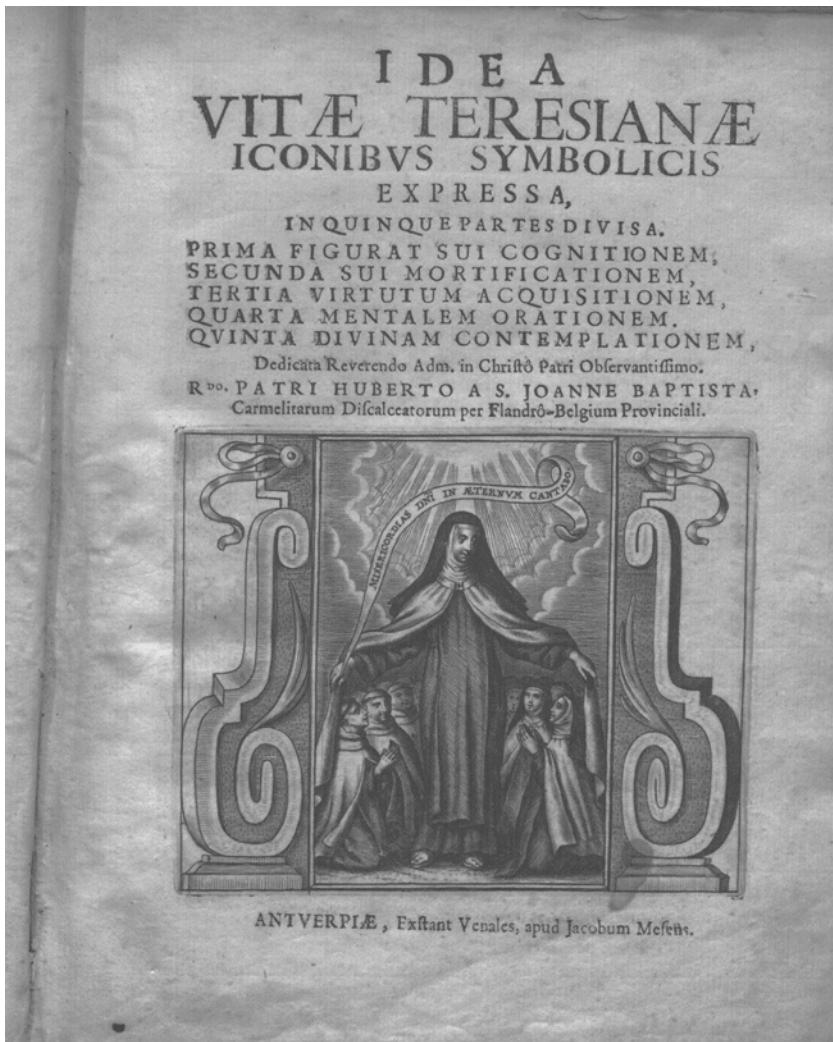


Fig. 6. Title-page to *Idea vitae Teresianaæ iconibvs symbolicis expressa* [...] (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: n.d. [ca. 1686]). K.U. Leuven, Maurits Sabbe Library.

three types of vision, albeit indirectly with *visio corporalis* and *visio spiritualis* and directly only with *visio intellectualis*. Teresa experienced imaginative vision and intellectual vision in alternation rather than succession. And she achieved the acme of her spiritual life (the seventh dwelling place of what she called the interior castle) in 1572 through both non-corporeal types of vision.²⁷ In the *Idea vitae Teresiana*, these two types of vision are brought together in a single composition, now with a nun, perhaps Saint Teresa herself, as visionary [Fig. 7].²⁸

If we consider all ten of Wierix's plates (not to mention any others that may have been planned), instead of just these two, the interrelationship of the images is obviously much more complicated, and the mathematical possibilities for ordering them are enormously, though not immeasurably, greater; to be precise: whereas there are two possible sequences for two prints, there are ten factorial, that is, 3,628,800 possible sequences for ten prints. Within writings on mystical theology, terminology for various states and experiences varies, and progressive steps are often not codified, or there is little consensus on what experience or state might precede or follow another. As Juan de Jesús María points out in his *Theologia Mystica*, the number and order of divine raptures are not to be fixed, and the gifts of God granted in such variety cannot be rigidly circumscribed.²⁹ Likewise, John of the Cross, in *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, after describing a step-by-step process of God's drawing the soul toward him, notes that 'it may not always be necessary for Him to keep so mathematically to this order'.³⁰

²⁷ Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas* 439; 440 (*Moradas del castillo interior*, 7.1.7, 7.2.1). Cf. van Wyhe, "The *Idea Vitae Teresiana*" 205 on the persistence of intellectual activity within 'higher' stages of the *via unitiva*.

²⁸ In the *Ichnographia emblematica*, the text from the *Idea vitae Teresiana*, which describes the two types of *visio*, is used, but a depiction of the *Noli me tangere* is substituted for the nun and her vision(s). On the identity of the figures in the *Idea vitae Teresiana*, see Wyhe van "The *Idea Vitae Teresiana*" 174, who argues that the figures are generic and emblematic, rather than meant to represent Teresa and John of the Cross specifically.

²⁹ Jesús María, *Theologia mystica* 14 (*Canones*, 21).

³⁰ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 177 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.17.4): 'Y desta manera va Dios llevando al alma de grado en grado hasta lo más interior. No porque sea siempre necesario guardar este orden de primero y postrero tan puntual como eso, porque a veces hace Dios uno sin otro y por lo más interior lo menos interior y todo junto, que eso es como Dios ve que conviene al alma o como le quiere hacer las mercedes. Pero la via ordinaria es conforme a lo dicho'. Trans. from John of the Cross, *Complete Works* 157. Jerónimo Gracián, in the fifth chapter of his *Dilucidario del verdadero espíritu* ('De los cinco grados de unión que nacen de las potencias unidas. Declarase en qué consiste la esencia de la unión, y el orden que ha de llevar



Fig. 7. Unknown artist, engraved illustration to *Idea vitae Teresiana iconibus symbolicis expressa* [...] (Antwerp, Jacob Mesens: n.d. [ca. 1686]) pl. 95. K.U. Leuven, Maurits Sabbe Library.

Without specific external evidence, it is not possible to know what order Wierix may have intended for the plates, but we may take some solace in the idea that discovering some originally intended sequence – if there was one – is not necessary for understanding them.

Indistinct Understanding

And we may take further solace in the idea that they need not be fully understood in any case. As John pointed out in the prologue to *The Spiritual Canticle*, ‘mystical wisdom, which comes through love and is the subject of these stanzas, need not be understood distinctly in order to cause love and affection in the soul, for it is given according to the mode of faith, through which we love God without understanding Him’.³¹ But what indistinct understanding *is* possible must come, as John points out in that prologue, through figures, similes, and similitudes that overflow from the abundant spirits of the mystics, which mysteries and secrets must be read, as he says, ‘with the simplicity of the spirit of knowledge and love they contain,’ lest they ‘seem to be absurdities rather than reasonable utterances’.³²

el alma en el proceder en la oración para llegar a lo mas perfecto’), ennumerates the ‘Cinco potencias que se unen con Cristo’ in one order – *la voluntad, el entendimiento y memoria, los apetitos, la imaginación, los sentidos exteriores* – but then elaborates (and ennumerates) them in a slightly different order, flopping the imagination and appetite (now singular) (in both instances imagination follows intellect) (Gracián, *Obras* 152–155). He is insistent on the importance of following a path ‘por grados y por orden’ to achieve union with Christ, but also notes: ‘Como hemos dicho otras veces, dos maneras hay de unión; una dada y sobrenatural, y en esta no puede haber orden ni se va subiendo por grados, que la da Dios como quiere y cuando quiere, como aconteció a San Pablo, que de la unión exterior de los sentidos viendo a Cristo y oyendo su voz comenzó su buen espíritu’.

³¹ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 566 (*Cantico espiritual* [B], “Prólogo” 2): ‘la sabiduría mística – la cul es por amor de que las presentes Canciones tratan – no ha menester distintamente entenderse para hacer efecto de amor y afición en el alma, porque es a modo de la fe, en la cual amamos a Dios sin entenderle’; trans. from John of the Cross, *Complete Works* 409.

³² Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 565 (*Cantico espiritual* [B], “Prólogo” 2): ‘Las cuales semejanzas no leídas con la sencillez del espíritu de amor e inteligencia que ellas llevan, antes parecen dislates que dichos puestos en razón [...]’, trans. from John of the Cross, *Complete Works* 408. He compares them to the Song of Songs and other sacred texts that are not exhausted by even the extensive commentary of the Fathers. On the *modus loquendi* of mystics, see Certéau M. de, *The Mystic Fable 1, The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, trans. M.B. Smith (Chicago – London: 1992) 113–200; Guiderdoni Bruslé A., “Discours mystique et ‘désimagination’ (*Entbildung*)

Nor is the meaning of those figures fixed, as a comparison of these images with other uses of comparable figures attests. One example may suffice. Juan de Jesús María describes two different kinds of spiritual drunkenness, which he categorizes as a kind of rapture.³³ In the first, the heart and all the sensible parts are inundated with a torrent of voluptuousness (*voluptatis torrente*) so that one cannot refrain from unusual movements. From the heart bursts forth, violently, a flame of love (*amoris flamma*). The signs of this supernal inebriation (*supernae ebrietatis*) are singing, rejoicing, sighing, making inarticulate sounds, shaking, jumping, clapping, running. ‘This experience’ (*affectio*), he says, ‘*by metaphor*, is called drunkenness’.³⁴ Just as in drunkenness the wine cannot be digested and is vomited out, so the ‘spiritual voluptuousness’ (*spiritualis voluptas*) cannot be controlled and flames forth with vehemence.³⁵ A second kind of spiritual drunkenness that he describes consists of quietude rather than unbounded joy, a desire not to move rather than an impulse to move wildly.³⁶

Aside from the title, the Wierix image of *Amorosa inebriatio* [Fig. 5] makes no reference to drunkenness. The first tercet corresponds roughly to part of Juan de Jesús María’s first description of spiritual drunkenness: a fire urges the soul toward his beloved (explicit only in the French). But the rest of the text, and the image, bespeaks frustration and failure. Because that which the soul desires ‘cannot be apprehended’ (*dum tamen non apprehendit*), he embraces and wants to hold always the cross (*Rencontrant sa croix, l’embrasse / Et la veult tosiour tenir*). But it is an empty cross, a relic, a vestige, a sign, a metonymy.

au début du dix-septième siècle”, in Vaeck M. van – Brems H. – Claassens G.H.M. (eds.), *The Stone of Alciato: Literature and Visual Culture in the Low Countries: Essays in Honour of Karel Porteman* (Leuven: 2003) 970–973.

³³ Juan de Jesús María, *Theologia mystica* 72–74 (6.6–7).

³⁴ Juan Jesús María, *Theologia mystica* 73 (6.7): ‘Vocatur autem haec affectio, ebrietas *per metaphoram*’ (emphasis mine).

³⁵ For his description of spiritual drunkenness, Juan de Jesús María follows in part Gracián, who quotes *Psalm 35:9* for the term ‘torrente voluptatis’ (Gracián, *Obras* 200–201 [*Dilucidario del verdadero espíritu*, 2.14]).

³⁶ John of the Cross mentions an amorous inebriation on several occasions, but does not describe it, although in describing Mary Magdalén’s desire for Christ, he says both that ‘her soul was [...] wounded and on fire’ (*estaba [...] su alma herida e inflamada*) for him, and that she demonstrated the ‘inebriation and urgent longing of love’ (*embriaguez y ansia de amor*) (Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas*, 387–388 [*Noche Oscura*, 2.13.6–7]; trans. from John of the Cross, *Complete Works* 359).

The *Imaginaria visio* [Fig. 3], which has been reproduced and adduced in isolation more often than the other plates in the series,³⁷ shows the Carmelite standing in a landscape, his arms folded beneath his cloak, his chin raised and his eyes gazing upwards. Above and behind him the Virgin and Child appear, dark against a white background, inside a frame whence issue rays of light. Surrounding the frame is a hole in the clouds, itself filled with rays of light. The image accords well with Teresa's description of a vision of Christ, which she specifies as an imaginative one (and it is here that she refers to the three types of *visio*): 'this most sacred humanity in its risen form was represented to me completely, as it is in paintings ['velut in imagine', in Wierix's inscription], with such wonderful beauty and majesty'.³⁸ It was scarcely describable: 'writing about it was very difficult for me to do because one cannot describe this vision without ruining it'.³⁹ The vision was otherwordly, 'surpass[ing] everything imaginable here on earth, even in just its whiteness and splendor'⁴⁰ – not a dazzling splendor, but a soft, infused whiteness, more intense than the light of the sun. Teresa struggled to understand the exact nature of the recurring vision:

It seemed clear to me in some cases that what I saw was an image, but in many other instances, no; rather, it was Christ Himself by reason of the clarity with which He was pleased to reveal Himself to me. Sometimes the vision was so obscure that it seemed to me an image, not like an earthly drawing no matter how perfect it may be – for I have seen many good ones. It is foolish to think that an earthly drawing can look anything like a vision; it does so no more nor less than living persons resemble their portraits. No matter how good the portrait may have

³⁷ E.g., Stoichita V.I., *Visionary Experience in the Golden Age of Spanish Art* (London: 1995) 60–61; Von zur Mühlen I., *Bild und Vision: Peter Paul Rubens und der "Pinsel Gottes"* (Frankfurt am Main: 1998); Haeger B., "Rubens' Rockox Triptych: Sight, Meditation, and the Justification of Images", *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 55 (2004) 117–153.

³⁸ Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas* 123 (*Libro de la Vida* 28.3): 'se me representó todo esta Humanidad sacratísima como se pinta resucitado, con tanta hermosura y mayestad [...]', trans. from Teresa of Avila, *Collected Works*, vol. I, 237–238.

³⁹ Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas* 123 (*Libro de la Vida* 28.3): 'hacíaseme harto de mal, porque no se puede decir que no sea deshacerse [...]', trans. from Teresa of Avila, *Collected Works*, vol. I, 238.

⁴⁰ Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas* 124 (*Libro de la Vida* 28.5): 'excede a todo lo que acá se puede imaginar, aun sola la blancura y resplandor', trans. from Teresa of Avila, *Collected Works*, vol. I, 239.

turned out, it can't look so natural that in the end it isn't recognized as a dead thing [...].

I don't say this example is a comparison – for comparisons are never so exact – but the truth. The difference lies in that which there is between living persons and paintings of them – no more nor less. For if what is seen is an image, it is a living image – not a dead man, but the living Christ. [...] Sometimes He comes with such great majesty that no one could doubt but that it is the Lord Himself. [...].⁴¹

Teresa points out that she does not see the vision with her bodily eyes; likewise, Wierix's Carmelite, though he looks up, cannot see with his bodily eyes the vision that is behind him.

Teresa defines her *visio intellectualis* negatively: 'since this wasn't an imaginative vision, I didn't see any form'; and 'For if I say that I see it with the eyes neither of the body nor of the soul, because it is not an imaginative vision, how do I know and affirm that He is more certainly at my side than if I saw Him?'; and then positively (but, even then, haltingly): 'the vision is represented through knowledge given to the soul that is clearer than sunlight. I don't mean that you see the sun or brightness, but that a light, without your seeing light, illuminates the intellect so that the soul may enjoy such a great good'.⁴²

⁴¹ Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas* 124–125 (*Libro de la Vida* 28.7–8): 'Bien me parecía en algunas cosas que era imagen lo que vía, mas por otras muchas no, sino que era el mismo Cristo conforme a la claridad con que era servido mostrárseme. Unas veces era tan en confuso que me parecía imagen, no como los dibujos de acá, por muy perfectos que sean, que hartos he visto buenos; es disbarate pensar que tiene semejanza lo uno con lo otro en ninguna manera, no más ni menos que la tiene una persona viva a su retrato, que por bien que esté sacado, no puede ser tan al natural, que – en fin – se ve es cosa muerta. [...] No digo que es comparación, que nunca son tan cabales, sino verdad, que hay la diferencia que de lo vivo a lo pintado no más ni menos; porque si es imagen, es imagen viva; no hombre muerto, sino Cristo vivo [...] Y viene a veces con tan grande majestad que no hay quien pueda dudar sino que es el mismo Señor. [...]', trans. from Teresa of Avila, *Collected Works* vol. I, 240.

⁴² Teresa de Jesús, *Obras completas* 118–119 (*Libro de la Vida* 27.2–3): 'como no era visión imaginaria, no vía en qué forma'; 'Porque si digo que con los ojos del cuerpo ni del alma no lo veo, porque no es imaginaria visión, ¿cómo entiendo y me afirmo con más claridad que está cabe mí que si lo viese?'; and 'se representa por una noticia a el alma, más clara que el sol; no digo que se ve sol, ni claridad, sino una luz que sin ver luz alumbra el entendimiento par que goce el alma de tan gran bien', trans. from Teresa of Avila, *Collected Works* vol. I, 228–229. For a nuanced discussion of Teresa's visionary experiences, the attempt to translate them into language, and the implications for visual imagery, see San Juan R.M., "Dizzying Visions. St. Teresa of Jesus and the Embodied Visual Image", in Göttsche C. – Neuber W. (eds.), *Spirits Unseen: The Representation of Subtle Bodies in Early Modern European Culture*, Intersections 9 (2007) 245–267.

Such a description obviously poses problems for the visual artist. Wierix uses a slightly different composition from that of *imaginaria visio* – perhaps simply for the sake of variety – but the depiction still consists of a standing Carmelite alone in a landscape, his face raised to the heavens, the open clouds of which reveal a shower of light. Here his hands are raised in prayer and his eyes are turned more toward (though perhaps still not looking directly at) the light, but the most obvious and significant difference is the object of the vision itself: a tetragrammaton.⁴³ These four Hebrew letters (yod, he, vav, he) elliptically spelling the name of God are often met in Netherlandish prints of the sixteenth and seventeenth century as a representation of the first person of the Trinity, sometimes, but not always, offered as a sop to Protestant viewers uneasy with the depiction of God the Father in his conventional guise as a bearded old man. In this instance, the word works as a less material alternative for a picture. Although the tetragrammaton is not the Logos of the Trinity, its function here is comparable: when the Word was ‘made flesh,’ that which was divine and immaterial became human and material. Furthermore, the tetragrammaton is not simply a name like any other, but an essentially unutterable name (because it lacks vowels), the *nomen innominabile*, signifying, without depicting, the incomprehensible deity. This deity’s elusive and indefinable yet absolute nature is suggested by the translations of the name, particularly as it most famously appears in *Exodus* 3:14, in which the voice from the burning bush says to Moses, cryptically, ‘I am who I am’ (‘Ego sum qui sum,’ in the Vulgate) and charges Moses to tell the children of Israel, ‘He who is [*qui est*], hath sent me to you’. The name does not operate in a normal system of signification but instead signals God’s utter self-referentiality. Wierix’s print does not depict a vision of the tetragrammaton, as it might appear at first glance, but rather proposes a visual metaphor for that which is inde-pictable and even indescribable, using the tetragrammaton and a figure looking up toward (or past) it as a means of signifying *intellectualis*

⁴³ On the tetragrammaton, see Krücke A., “Der Protestantismus und die bildliche Darstellung Gottes”, *Zeitschrift für Kunstwissenschaft* 13,1–2 (1959) 76–82; Agamben G., *Language and Death: The Place of Negativity*, trans. K.E. Pinkus with M. Hardt, *Theory and History of Literature* 78 (Minneapolis and London: 1991) 27–30; Westerweel B., “What’s in a name? The Tetragrammaton at the Crossroads of Language, Thought and Visual Expression”, in Vaeck M. van – Brems H. – Claassens G.H.M. (eds.), *The Stone of Alciato: Literature and Visual Culture in the Low Countries: Essays in Honour of Karel Porteman* (Leuven: 2003) 23–54.

visio. The tetragrammaton within the composition signifies the ineffable, unseeable, absolute presence of God – a divine illumination of the intellect, in Teresa's terms. In *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, John of the Cross expresses well the central paradox of seeing the unseeable: ‘The eyes of the soul, then, should be ever withdrawn from distinct, visible, and intelligible apprehensions. Such elements are pertinent to sense and provide no security or foundation for faith. Its eyes should be fixed on the invisible, on what belongs not to sense but to spirit, and on what, as it is not contained in a sensible figure, brings the soul to union with God in faith’.⁴⁴ Most important, ‘the union of the intellect’ with God is said in Wierix’s print to be effected ‘without mediation’ (*ut iungatur intellectus / ipsi sine medio*).

Remote and Proximate Means

Victor Stoichita imagines, understandably, that John of the Cross would have strongly disapproved of Wierix’s depiction of *visio imaginativa*, which, he says, advocates what John denounced, namely, ‘that vision can function as an intermediary,’ because for John, ‘who epitomized the aniconic pole of Spanish mysticism,’ ‘visions as well as paintings were [...] banned from contemplative activity’.⁴⁵ But I suggest that he overstates John’s aniconism. He translates the comment from *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*, ‘todo lo que la imaginación puede imaginar y el entendimiento recibir y entender no es ni puede ser medio próximo para la unión de Dios’,⁴⁶ as ‘nothing that the imagination can produce can be used to capture union with God’,⁴⁷ whereas a more literal translation, such as ‘everything that the imagination can imagine and the understanding receive and understand is not, nor can be, a proximate

⁴⁴ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 174 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.16.12): ‘Por tanto, siempre se han de apartar los ojos del alma de todas estas aprehensiones que ella puede ver y entender distintamente – lo cual comunica en sentido y no hace fundamento y seguro de fe – y ponerlos en lo que no ve ni pertenece al sentido sino al espíritu (que no cae en figura de sentido), que es lo que la lleva a la unión en fe, la cual es el propio medio, como está dicho’, trans. from John of the Cross, *Complete Works* 153–154.

⁴⁵ Stoichita, *Visionary Experience* 60.

⁴⁶ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 147 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.8.4).

⁴⁷ Stoichita, *Visionary Experience* 60.

means of union with God',⁴⁸ more narrowly indicates the limits of visual imagery. Undoubtedly, for John, supernatural transformation and union demand 'an elevation above all the sensory and rational parts of nature',⁴⁹ but he often employed the qualifying 'proximate'⁵⁰ and in this way took up, in fact, a less extreme position than that implied by the 'sine medio' of Wierix's engraving of *Intellectualis visio*. John would accept the utility of visual imagery up to a point – a point that may demarcate the meditative from the contemplative, as Stoichita may be implying – after which it becomes useless, and in this he differed little from many mystics before and after him.⁵¹ John points out that the soul is led to contemplation *through* the other apprehensions, of which the soul must ultimately be divested. Discursive meditation – whose purpose is to acquire some knowledge and love of God – and imagining God through figures are necessary for beginners and still useful for proficients in the early stages of contemplation, but they are a remote rather than proximate means to God, and should ultimately be put aside in favor of contemplation.⁵² Spiritual persons can, and usually do, have visions of images, persons, and so on, he acknowledges; but one must flee them, he asserts, even if they

⁴⁸ Translation and emphasis mine. See also the translation in John of the Cross, *Complete Works* 127: 'Nothing which could possibly be imagined or comprehended in this life can be a proximate means of union with God'.

⁴⁹ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 132 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.4.2): 'trasponerse a todo lo que contiene su natural, que es sensitivo y racional', trans. from John of the Cross, *Complete Works* 112.

⁵⁰ Note a qualification of a different sort in the last phrase of the following: 'Antes que tratemos del propio y acomodado medio para la unión de Dios, que es la fe, conviene que probemos cómo ninguna cosa criada ni pensada puede servir al entendimiento de propio medio para unirse con Dios, y cómo todo lo que el entendimiento puede alcanzar, antes le sirve de impedimento que de medio, si a ello se quisiese aspirar' (Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 146 [*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.8.1]).

⁵¹ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas*, esp. 151–180 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.10–17). For John's analysis of visions represented to the imagination supernaturally (that is, not through the five bodily senses), see 170–171 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.16.1–3). It is also worth noting John's firm endorsement of the Tridentine position on images, even if it is perhaps *pro forma* (*ibidem* 259; *Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 3.15.2). For an extended discussion of the 'motivating goods' (including statues and paintings of saints) which 'pueden dar gozo a la voluntad,' but which can also be harmful if abused, see *ibidem* 296–316 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 3.33–45).

⁵² John elsewhere likens the passage from meditation to contemplation to the weaning of a child, the withdrawal of the sweet milk (Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 321 (*Noche oscura*, 1.1.2); see also *ibid.*, 819–820 (*Llama de amor viva*, Canc. 3.32)). But note that images may be useful precisely in the act of rejecting them (see Guiderdoni Bruslé, "Discours mystique").

come from God. Yet such visions and feelings, even when dismissed, necessarily and ineluctably produce through supernatural infusion an effect – a beneficial effect of love, knowledge, or sweetness – primarily in the soul rather than in the body. John asks directly the question of why God gives supernatural visions at all. They are a means, he says, by which God lifts the soul gently from one extreme (low) to the other (high): ‘He must gradually bring the soul after its own manner to the other end, spiritual wisdom, which is incomprehensible to the senses. Thus, naturally or supernaturally, He brings a person to the supreme spirit of God by first instructing him through discursive meditation and through forms, images, and sensible means, according to the individual’s own manner of acquiring knowledge’.⁵³ Since knowledge is gained through the senses, this is how he begins. ‘He first perfects the corporal senses, moving one to make use of natural exterior objects that are good [...].’⁵⁴ Then he grants some supernatural favors and gifts (visions, odors, and so on). ‘Besides this the interior bodily senses, such as the imagination and phantasy, are gradually perfected and accustomed to good through considerations, meditations, and holy reasonings, and the spirit is instructed’.⁵⁵ God may then enlighten and spiritualize the imagination and fantasy further with some supernatural imaginative visions.

Ultimately, we need not find these images surprising, even in the context of a contemplative tradition that espouses as its goal an imageless spiritual experience or state of being. As I have suggested, they were not meditative (or contemplative) prompts meant to bring the votary directly to the highest spiritual states, but were attempts to describe

⁵³ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 176 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.17.3): ‘para levantar Dios al alma al sumo conocimiento, para hacerlo suavemente, ha de comenzar y tocar desde el bajo y fin extremo de los sentidos del alma, para así irla llevando al modo de ella hasta el otro fin de su sabiduría espiritual, que no cae en sentido; por lo cual, la lleva primero instruyéndola por formas y imágenes y vías sensibles a su modo de entender (ahora naturales, ahora sobrenaturales) y por discursos a ese sumo espíritu de Dios’, trans. from John of the Cross, *Complete Works* 156.

⁵⁴ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 177 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.17.4): ‘De donde primero le perfectiona el sentido corporal, moviéndole a que use de buenos objetos naturales perfectos exteriores [...]', trans. from John of the Cross, *Collected Works* 156.

⁵⁵ Juan de la Cruz, *Obras completas* 177 (*Subida del Monte Carmelo*, 2.17.4): ‘Y allende de eso, los sentidos corporales interiores de que aquí vamos tratando, como son imaginativa y fantasía, juntamente se los va perfeccionando y habituando al bien con consideraciones, meditaciones y discursos santos, y en todo esto instruyendo al espíritu’, trans. from John of the Cross, *Collected Works* 156.

and depict such states. Just as Teresa's description of her means of prayer was thought by her confessors to be of potential use to other votaries, these depictions – or text-image combinations – could likewise be of use. They, too, function through figures – of fire, of drunkenness, of marriage, of levitation, of vision, of wounds, and so on. And they, too, must ultimately fail to express what cannot be expressed.

Appendix: Order of the Wierix Plates

Alvin (1866): <i>Vie de saint Jean de la Croix</i>	Emond (1961): 'une imagerie des plus hauts états de la vie mystique'	Florisoone (1975)	Mauquoy- Hendrickx (1979): <i>Les étapes de l'ascension mystique</i>	New Hollstein (2004): <i>The Spiritual Song of the Carmelite John of the Cross</i>
Divinae Caliginis Ingressio	Divinae caliginis ingressio	Amorosa Inebriatio	Divinae Caliginis Ingressio	Divinae Caligenis Ingressio
Amorosa Inebriatio	Imaginaria visio	[Untitled]	Imaginaria visio	Imaginaria Visio
Imaginaria Visio	Intellectualis visio	Imaginaria Visio	Amicabilis Desponsatio	Amicabilis Desponsatio
Amicabilis Desponsatio	Amicabilis desponsatio	Intellectivalis Visio	Prodigiosa Elevatio	Prodigiosa Elevatio
Frvitionis Excitatio	Perfectionis ascensio	Divini Amoris Intensio	Perfectionis Ascensio	Perfectionis Ascensio
Prodigiosa Elevatio		Frvitionis Excitatio	Frvitionis Excitatio	Frvitionis Excitatio
Perfectionis Ascensio		Perfectionis Ascensio	Amorosa Inebriatio	Amorosa Inebriatio
		Prodigiosa Elevatio	Intellectivalis Visio	Intellectivalis Visio
		Amicabilis Desponsatio	Divini Amoris Intensio	Divini Amoris Intensio
		Divinae Caliginis Ingressio	[Le parfum du ciel]	[The Soul Receiving a Gift from Heaven]

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WORKING THE SENSES WITH WORDS: THE ACT OF RELIGIOUS READING IN THE DUTCH REPUBLIC

Els Stronks¹

In 1622, readers of the devotional treatise *Ecce Homo, ofte ooghen-salve voor die noch sitten in blintheydt des ghemoedts* (*Ecce Homo, or Eye-salve for those who still sit in the blindness of their hearts*), written by the Dutch Reformed minister Willem Teellinck, were confronted with the author's deep distrust of the devotional image. In the preface to the *Ecce Homo* Teellinck explained to his readers:

In many places one finds paintings of a head crowned with thorns and covered with blood, with the caption *Ecce Homo*, that is, Behold the Man. This is a human invention, to present us with the inhuman passion, and the most bitter suffering of our Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ, and thus it also awakens merely human emotions and bodily devotion.²

Teellinck was obviously acquainted with 'Ecce Homo' imagery, but rejected it despite its biblical origins. The living word of God alone (*alleene*), rather than any image that should be the Christian's compass. In Teellinck's opinion sincere devotion to Christ found expression in the accurate and conscientious reading of God's Word.³ Despite the fact that the subject of the *Ecce Homo* was visual in nature – *Ecce*

¹ With special thanks to Rex Trewin for his helpful corrections.

² 'Men vint in veel plaatseen geschildert een hooft ghekroont met Doornen, ende albebloedt, met dit op-schrift: *Ecce Homo*, dat is, *Siet de Mensche*: Dits een menschen vont, om ons d'onmenscheliche passie, ende het alderbitterste lijden onses Heylandts, ende Salichmakers *Iesu Christi*, voor te stellen, soo verweckt het oock maer menscheliche beweginghen, ende een vleescheliche Devotie'. Teellinck W., *Ecce Homo, ofte ooghen-salve voor die noch sitten in blintheydt des ghemoedts* (Middelburg: Hans van der Hellen, voor Geeraert van de Vivere: 1622) fol. *1v.

³ 'maer hebben ons de heylige Schriftuere enckelicken tot een Exemplaer voorghestelt, om het lijden Christi, ende de vruchten van dien te verclaren; als die daer weten dat het woort Gods alleene, is dat *twee-snijdende sweert*, 'twelck door-gaet tot de verscheydinge der zielen, ende oock des gheestes, zenuwen, ende leden des herten, dienstich om de zielen te bekeeren, ende in de ware bekeeringhe te verstercken' ('but have taken only Holy Scripture as our example to explain the suffering of Christ and its fruits; as those who know that the word of God alone, that *two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing of soul and of spirit, nerves, and the [hidden] parts of the heart*,

Homo after all translates to ‘Behold the man’ – and despite the fact that the volume was intended for unskilled readers, who could have benefited from visual aids, the book remained without illustrations.

The images of the crucified Christ that Teellinck opposed were seldom produced in the Dutch Republic at the time, but they had been especially popular in the Southern Netherlands ever since Antwerp was captured by the Spanish in 1585.⁴ Teellinck as well as his readers could well have been acquainted with Southern Netherlandish examples of the genre. Inhabitants of the Dutch Republic could travel to the Southern Netherlands somewhat more freely during the Twelve Years’ Truce and books and prints produced in the Southern Netherlands were most likely also available in the Dutch Republic.⁵ An important example of this production is Jerome Nadal’s *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* (Pictures of Gospel History), produced in Christoffel Plantin’s workshop in 1593.⁶ Nadal, who was St. Ignatius Loyola’s closest collaborator in the early days of the Society of Jesus, combined

can serve to convert souls and to strengthen them in true conversion’), Teellinck, *Ecce Homo* fol. *1v.

⁴ Christ’s Passion had become the favorite subject of the Southern print and book culture in the latter part of the sixteenth century, according to Coelen P. van der, *De schrift verbeeld. Oudtestamentische prenten uit renaissance en barok* (Nijmegen: 1998) 129.

⁵ Teellinck even wrote a pamphlet to warn against this kind of ‘image tourism’, urging his compatriots to refrain from the lamentable gawking at idols and at the Papists’ idolatry, which he claimed many of them had engaged in most foolishly in neighbouring provinces since the Truce. See Teellinck W., *Timotheus, ofte ghetrouwe waerschouwinge tegen het verdrietelick begapen der affgoden ende afgodischen dienst der papisten, twelck by vele vande gereformeerde seer onbedachtelick gepleecht werdt in Brabant ende Vlaenderen by occasie van desen stilstand van wapenen: hier wort oock verhandelt de groote genegentheyt, die alle menschen hebben tot d’afgoderije [...]* (Middelburg, Richard Schilders: 1611) fol. A2r. The second edition is quoted, since no copy of the first edition has survived. On the book trade between the Southern and Northern Netherlands see Clemens, T., “The trade in Catholic books from the Northern and Southern Netherlands 1650–1795”, in Berkvens-Stevelinck C. et alii (eds.), *Le Magasin de l’Univers. The Dutch Republic as the centre of the European book trade* (Leiden: 1992) 85–94.

⁶ These prints accompanied texts which were printed in a separate volume, titled *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Annotations and meditations on the Gospels), originally printed in Antwerp in 1595 at Plantin’s workshop, and reprinted twice before 1607. See for a detailed analysis of these prints and the relationship between Nadal and St. Ignatius Loyola, see Melion W.S., “Haec per imagines huius mysterij Ecclesia sancta [clamat]: The Image of the Suffering Christ in Jerome Nadal’s Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia”, in Homann F., S.J. (ed.), *Jerome Nadal, Annotationes and Meditations on the Gospels*, Volume III: The Passion Narratives. (Philadelphia: 2007) 1–73, esp. 2–3.

engravings, portraying episodes from the Gospels executed by the premier Flemish engravers, with his explanatory notes and meditations on these episodes. Nadal's *Evangelicae historiae imagines* included four *Ecce Homo* scenes – a detail of one of them is shown in [Fig. 1] – in which the reader is turned into a witness of the unfolding action.

Just over a decade later, the Dutch Reformed distrust of the devotional image was even more clearly demonstrated by the Utrecht theologian Gisbertus Voetius, the leading figure of the Pietist movement ('Further Reformation') of the Dutch Reformed Church. Voetius removed a line of text in which Christ was described as the 'Justitia Solem' (Sun of Justice) from his inaugural address held in 1634, when it was reprinted in 1664, most likely because Utrecht University had begun using an emblem depicting the sun surrounded by the words 'Sol Iustitiae Illustra Nos' (Sun of Righteousness, Enlighten Us) as its logo in the 1630s.⁷ This kind of emblematic religious imagery was detested by Voetius. In 1642 he wrote with great aversion to any visual representation of Christ – be it a dove, a cross, or any other image – in a tripartite treatise entitled *De idolatria indirecta et participata*:

Apply this [the interdiction against depicting Jesus] to all signs, drawings or symbols representing Christ or the Holy Ghost of the Holy Trinity, be it in a direct manner, or emblem, or in the manner of hieroglyphs such as a lamb, a cross, a sun, dove, or triangle with ray beams and the name of God.⁸

Neither biblical illustrations nor emblematic religious images were allowed in the context of God's Word, in Voetius' view, which dominated

⁷ See Voetius G., *De Pietate cum Scientia Coniungenda. Inaugurele rede gehouden aan de Illustre School te Utrecht op de 21ste augustus 1634*, ed. and trans. A. de Groot (Kampen: 1978) 72 and 97–98. From its inception in 1634, the Illustrious School in Utrecht was using the sun emblem with Latin motto 'Sol Iustitiae Illustra Nos'. The professor of classical studies Justus Liraeus used the phrase in his inaugural lecture on June 18th, 1634, before Voetius struck these words from his inaugural address. On the opening Day of the Utrecht University, March 26th in 1636, the first Rector Magnificus was presented with the sun emblem and its text on the official seals and crest of the new university. See Broek R. van den, *Hy leeret ende beschuttet: over het wapen en de zinspreuk van de Universiteit Utrecht* (Utrecht: 1995) 18.

⁸ 'Haec applica ad insignia quae praeferunt Christum aut Spiritum S., aut trinitatem, idque vel proprie, vel emblematicae seu hieroglyphice per agnum, crucem, solem, columbam, triangulum cum radiis et nomine Dei', Voetius G. *Selectarum Disputationum Theologicarum Partes I–V* (Utrecht, Johannes van Waesberge: 1659) vol. III, 289 (trans. J. Waszink).



Fig. 1. Jérôme Nadal, ‘Coronatur Spinis Iesus’ [Jesus is crowned with thorns], detail, in *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines ex ordine evangeliorum, quae toto anno in missae sacrificio recitantur, in ordinem temporis vitae Christi digestae* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin: 1593). Image © Library of the Utrecht University.

the Dutch Reformed Church at the time.⁹ In the Dutch Republic, Calvin's theology had shaped the cultural conventions which guided and restricted the work of authors, engravers and publishers of illustrated religious literature during the first half of the seventeenth century.

In this contribution, I will depart from the observation that religious reading practices in the Dutch Republic were confined to accurate and conscientious reading of unillustrated religious texts based on the Bible – and thus to the authority of the word – during the first half of the seventeenth century. The growing need felt among Dutch Reformers for a spiritual deepening of faith becomes clear from Teellinck's admission to having modelled the devotional features of this work on Catholic tradition, appropriating and, at the same time, adapting it to his aim of spreading his Dutch Reformed program as widely as possible. While personal devotion in the Catholic Church had been enhanced by texts illustrated with images – of Christ, Mary and the saints, for instance – the use of religious imagery presented a problem for authors and publishers in the Dutch Republic, even those who were not members of the Dutch Reformed Church.

My aim is to shed light on the diminishing of the authority of the word in the second half of the century, by demonstrating that various aids were introduced in the Dutch religious literature in order to address their readers not only through intellectual means but also by way of their emotional capacities. I will first focus on some examples of passion lyrics published in the 1650s, which offered textualized images to the reader, to be utilized to examine God's hidden features. I will then discuss religious emblems (produced from circa 1680 onward) which provided Dutch readers with visual instruments to support their religious reading practices, even though there were limits to what could be portrayed. Since these literary practices were

⁹ In the first half of the seventeenth century, opinion makers such as Teellinck and Voetius seem to have interpreted Calvin's instructions as total prohibitions, as I have argued in *Negotiating Differences. Word, Images and Religion in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden: 2011). For now, I would simply point out that Dutch sixteenth-century disputes on these issues had been dominated by Calvinist theology, as argued (among others) by Veldman I.J., "Protestantism and the Arts: Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Netherlands", in Finney P.C. (ed.), *Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition* (Grand Rapids: 1999) 397–421, esp. 421. As has been well established, Calvin was not opposed to all visual art. For recent studies on the subject, see Joby C.R., *Calvinism and the Arts: A Re-Assessment* (Leuven: 2007), and Zachman R.C., *Image and Word in the Theology of John Calvin* (Notre Dame: 2007).

intertwined with opinions on the role of the senses and emotions in the reading process, I will sketch the outlines of these issues before discussing some exemplary religious texts.

The Role of the Senses and Emotions in the Reading Process

In the early modern era, the Dutch – Catholics and Protestants alike – were generally suspicious of what were then regarded as extreme reading sensations. These sensations were perceived as potentially dangerous, as has recently been demonstrated by Karel Porteman and Mieke Smits-Veldt in their history of early modern Dutch literature, *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen* (A New Homeland for the Muses).¹⁰ Nevertheless, the printed versions of stories illuminating the conversions of Protestants often incorporated passages describing such extreme reading sensations, as is the case in the *Merkwaardige Bekeringsgeschiedenis* (Extraordinary History of a Conversion) of the eighteenth century farmer Lourens Ingelse. It recounts Ingelse's experience one day while reading the Bible:

It so happened, when I went to read God's Word that I heard God speak to me: when, where and why had I sinned, and what were my sins? What punishment should thus be mine, and could it be anything less than eternal damnation? Hearing this, I believed what He said; the sweat was running from my body, even though it was winter. Just by listening to God, my soul became so distressed that I could not live on, being captured by Him and screaming anxiously: *o God! If I'd known this, I would not have lived this way!*¹¹

¹⁰ Porteman K. and Smits-Veldt M.B., *Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen. Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse literatuur 1560–1700* (Amsterdam: 2008) 480.

¹¹ 'Het gebeurde dan wel, als ik in Gods Woord wilde lezen, dat ik God hoorde spreken als tot mij, wat, waar, wanneer en tegen Wie ik gezondigd had, welke straffen ik verdien had, die niet minder waren dan de eeuwige dood. Dit nu zo klaar horende en gelovende, liep het zweet somtijds van mijn lichaam, ofschoon het nu winter was. Zelfs op het horen dat God nu tot mij sprak en wat Hij tot mij zeide, geraakte mijn ziel zo ontsteld, dat ik niet meer kon leven, zijnde in banden en in nare [=benauwd] wee uitroepende: *o God! had ik dat zo geweten, ik zou zo niet hebben geleefd!*', Ingelse L., *Merkwaardige Bekeringsgeschiedenis van Lourens Ingelse in leven landbouwer op de Hofstede, in de Oranjepolder, eiland Walcheren. Tengevolge van de zware vervolging en verbanning, hem en zijn lotgenoten aangedaan, wegens hun gehechtheid aan de Oude Psalmberijming, tijdens de invoering der Nieuwe Berijming te Westkapelle, Anno 1774–1776*. Door hemzelf te boek gesteld, ed. J. Keersemaker, (Middelburg: 2001) 8.

Some time later Ingelse is imprisoned in Veere, because of his participation in what has been called the ‘psalmoproer’, riots which occurred when a new versification of the Psalms was introduced in the Dutch Reformed Church in the second half of the eighteenth century, much to the dislike of the most orthodox churchgoers. Ingelse read some more while he was in prison, with the same terrifying results. The people surrounding him tried to calm him down: ‘My praying, whimpering and lamenting were so loud, that people outside the prison could hear me. As a result, the guard came up to me and said: ‘This is no way to live, you should be more cheerful!’.¹²

The physical symptoms described here, the heavy sweating, the loud screaming, are connected to the sensory responses evoked by the reading of God’s Word – or, in Ingelse’s case, even the *thought* of reading God’s Word. His symptoms can easily be interpreted metaphorically, but in the early modern setting it makes more sense to take them literally. Then it becomes clear why Ingelse’s bystanders were afraid. The four-humor doctrine of Galen presumed a relationship between the physical and mental: reading like this, could severely disturb the delicate balance of humors found in the human body and result in sickness or even in death. Ingelse could kill himself if he kept on reading in this manner.¹³

What is more, individual imbalances had larger consequences at the level of the society with a potential for disastrous disruption of fragile social structures.¹⁴ The kind of reading habits displayed by Ingelse could thus not only be devastating to him, but also to Dutch society as a whole. The so-called “Nijkerkse beroeringen” (the Nijkerk turmoil) which occurred around 1750, serves as an illustration of these dangers. This turmoil began during a church service in the Dutch Reformed Church of Nijkerk in 1749, held by the minister Roldanus,

¹² Het bidden, kermen en lamenteren [=weeklagen] was zó sterk, dat de mensen, buiten het gevangenhuis zijnde, zulks hoorden, waardoor de cipier tot mij kwam en zeide: *zulks is geen leven, ik moest maar vrolijk zijn!*, Ingelse, *Merkwaardige Bekeeringsgeschiedenis* 20.

¹³ Craik K.A., *Reading Sensations in Early Modern England. Early Modern Literature in History* (New York: 2007) 3; Schoenfeldt M., *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England: Physiology and Inwardness in Spenser, Shakespeare, Herbert, and Milton* (Cambridge: 1999) 2–3; and Narveson K., “Traces of Reading Practice in Thomas Bentley’s ‘Monument of Matrones.’”, *ANQ – A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews* 21 (2008) 11–19.

¹⁴ Paster G.K., *Humoring the Body: Emotions and the Shakespearean Stage* (Chicago: 2004) 72 and 244.

when an old woman started to scream and pray while Roldanus was reading from the Bible. Afterwards this incident was repeated at a larger scale: in Roldanus' church, and later elsewhere in the area. Some of the people listening to Roldanus shivered, others even lost consciousness. These effects were widely debated and feared at the time.

In spite of their frightening and feared effects, these kinds of reading and listening experiences were also highly valued and sought after, by Protestants and Catholics alike, mostly because of their supposed ability to unite the reader with God. It was Augustine, in his *Confessions*, who had strongly suggested that intense and impressionable reading could enhance the communication between God and the faithful.¹⁵ To evoke the kind of reading sensations advocated by Augustine, Catholic writers started to produce texts in which the senses of the readers were stimulated to evoke religious sensations.¹⁶ To intensify these emotions and passions, increasing numbers of illustrations were added, as the printing press facilitated the addition of more and more imagery to text editions.¹⁷

Along with the desire and opportunities to illustrate religious texts there came the fear of the powerful effects these illustrated texts could have. We now know through neurological research, that images address the part of the brain that controls human mnemonic and affective capacities, whereas texts stimulate the area in which the logical processes are performed. This neurological evidence was of course unknown to Augustine, but he was well aware of the dangers involved with imagery.¹⁸ Following the footsteps of Plato, he warned people not to look at religious images as if they were 'animated objects'. He nevertheless emphasized the positive effect which could be achieved by

¹⁵ Stock B., *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-Knowledge, and the Ethics of Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA and London: 1996) 2, 5, 18 and 284..

¹⁶ Kempis Thomas a, *Qui Sequitur Me, dat is. Die Navolginghe Christi: bedeylt in vier boecken. [...] Overgestelt uutten Latijne in Brabants Duytsch door Heer Nicolaus van Winge Canoninck Regulier S. Martens te Loven* (Antwerpen, Jan van Keerbergen: 1606).

¹⁷ The implication of this was not that all (new) devotional texts were produced with imagery. De Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* (first printed in 1548) for instance was not illustrated till 1657. See Mochizuki M.M., "Ignatius de Loyola, S.J., Geestelycke oeffeninghen van den H. Vader Ignatius van Loyola (Antwerp: Michiel Cnobbaert, 1673)", in Begheyn P., S.J. and Faesen R., S.J. (eds.), *Jesuit Books in the Low Countries 1540–1773* (Leuven: 2009) 196–201.

¹⁸ As argued in Morgan D., "Image", in idem (ed.), *Key Words in Religion, Media and Culture* (New York: 2008) 96–110, esp. 97, based on research described in Thompson R.F. – Madigan S.A., *Memory: The Key to Consciousness* (Princeton: 2007).

visual stimuli.¹⁹ Whether as a direct result of Augustine's opinions on the matter or not, the Catholics started to illustrate their devotional texts on a massive scale when the opportunities arose in the age of the printing press. Catholic imagery in devotional literature was no longer used solely to enforce the readers' memory and comprehension, but also to mobilize their emotional faculties.²⁰

The growing habit of illustrating devotional texts among Catholics in the fifteenth and sixteenth century not only prompted discussions of the hierarchy of the senses, but also evoked reflections on the role of emotions in devotional reading practices. These Catholic conventions were at odds with cultural developments in the Dutch Republic in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, which were to a large extent dominated by Calvin's theology. Calvin specifically argued that God taught us – as witnessed by the cry of Jesus on the cross, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me' (*Matthew 27:46*) – to include emotions in our experience of faith; but the intensive stimulation of the eye and mind that Catholics sought through the use of illustrated text, presented a problem for those who wrote and lived according to Calvin's theology.²¹ Since they were convinced that faith is in the invisible, all attempts to bring the visual into the *praxis pietatis* were considered to be dangerous. As a result, even the title pages of religious works of Dutch Reformed writers often lacked illustrations.²²

In the Dutch Republic the situation became even more intense because Calvin also propagated the ideal of independent, individual reading of religious texts.²³ No longer were readers corrected and

¹⁹ Morgan D., *The Sacred Gaze. Religious Visual Culture in Theory and Practice* (Los Angeles: 2005) 142 and 145.

²⁰ [...] une nouvelle form de dévotion commença lentement à s'imposer à côté des formes plus officiellement traditionnelles de dévotion publique, strictement liée aux célébrations liturgiques. Une 'dévotion privée', totalement individuelle, s'imposait, liée à la profondeur de la foi vécu à l'intérieur de l'âme humaine particulière, a son rapport avec Dieu et les mystères de la foi', Insolera M., "La spiritualité dans le livre illustré moderne en général", in Insolera M. – Salviucci L. (eds.), *La spiritualité en images aux Pays-Bas méridionaux dans les livres imprimés des XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*. Miscellanea neerlandica 13 (Leuven: 1996) 4.

²¹ See Strier, R., "Against the Rule of Reason. Praise of Passion from Petrarch to Luther to Shakespeare to Herbert", in Paster G.K. et alii (eds.), *Reading the Early Modern Passions. Essays in the Cultural History of Emotion* (Philadelphia: 2004) 23–42.

²² As argued in Stronks E., "Gewapende vrede: woord, beeld en religie in de Republiek", *De zeventiende eeuw* (2009) 2–25.

²³ Gilmont J.F., "Protestant Reformation and Reading", in Cavallo G. – Chartier R. – Cochrane L.G. (eds.), *A History of Reading in the West. Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book* (Oxford: 1999) 213–237, esp. 227.

moved through the communal reading of the Bible. Reading in silence placed one's source of curiosity completely under personal control and could also be extended over a much longer period of time than the reading aloud in the church services.²⁴ To reduce the possible damage of the act of reading alone and in silence, the Dutch Calvinist minister Willem à Brakel included a chapter on the reading practice in his devotional handbook the *Redelyke godts-dienst* (Rational Religion), published in 1700.²⁵ Brakel's advice was to limit the amount of hours spent reading alone. One should instead seek the company of others, to sing and pray together, and discuss each other's experiences afterwards. Brakel believed that social structures would provide enough balance and control to avoid the excessive negative effects of such solitary devotional reading.²⁶ From diaries and stories about conversions we know his advice was not always followed, but Brakel did represent the official point of view of the Dutch Reformed Church on the act of reading.²⁷

Protestants like a Brakel and Teellinck could most certainly relate to the words used by Catholics to evoke and describe religious emotions. In Teellinck's last work, the *Soliloquium*, published in 1628, the craving of the soul for the unity with Jesus is articulated in words Teellinck borrowed from the *De Imitatione Christi* by Thomas à Kempis.²⁸ But in contrast to the Catholics, the Dutch Reformed were of the opinion that these emotions were to be evoked by reading or listening, not by looking at images. Hearing, according to Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, were preferable to seeing, because God made Himself heard but not seen.²⁹ Traces of this line of reasoning are found in

²⁴ Saenger P., "Reading in the Later Middle Ages", in *A History of Reading in the West* 120–148, esp. 137.

²⁵ Lieburg F. van, "De verbale traditie van een piëtistische geloofservaring. De rechtvaardiging in de vierschaar der consciëntie", *Egodocumenten: nieuwe wegen en benaderingen. Speciaal nummer van: Tijdschrift voor sociale en economische geschiedenis* 1, 4 (2004) 66–85, esp. 68.

²⁶ Stronks E., "Private devotion in a protestant diary: Jacoba van Thiel's Rekenboek van de ziel met God", in Ingen F. van – Moore C. (eds.), *Gebetsliteratur der frühen Neuzeit als Hausfrömmigkeit: Funktionen und Formen in Deutschland und den Niederlanden* (Wiesbaden: 2001) 179–192, esp. 185.

²⁷ Stronks, "Private devotion" 86.

²⁸ See for a detailed comparison between Teellinck and Thomas à Kempis, Op 't Hof W.J., *Willem Teellinck (1579–1629). Leven, geschriften en invloed* (Kampen: 2008) 287.

²⁹ 'according to Moses: Remember: "what Jehovah spoke to you in the valley of Horeb" [Deut. 4:15]; you heard a voice, "you did not see a body", Calvin J., *Institutes*

Willem Teellinck's treatise *Adam*, based on sermons preached by this Dutch Reformed minister around 1620. The hierarchy of the senses is discussed in relation to Teellinck's interpretation of *Genesis* 2:7 ('And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul').³⁰ Teellinck first discusses the creation of the human body, and the wonderful ability of the human eyes, ears and nose to absorb all that surrounds them.³¹ After the Fall however, these bodily sensations and the 'outer senses' were corrupted, so that now only the 'ghemeyne sin' (the inner sense) and the 'oog der ziele' (eye of the soul) can be relied upon.³² They are needed to transform the impressions of the 'outer senses' into sensible insights. According to Teellinck, true devotion should ideally be indifferent to primary sensations such as taste, sight, smell, health and sleep.³³ Out of the three cognitive processes distinguished by Augustine – the corporal, spiritual and intellectual – Teellinck singled out intellectual activity as the most important.³⁴ The human

of the Christian religion, ed. J.T. McNeill (Louisville [etc.]: 2006) 100–101, Volume I, book I, Chapter xi, 2.

³⁰ The treatise was first printed in *Het eerste stuk van de werken van Willem Teellinck* (1659). See on this topic Westerink H., *Met het oog van de ziel. Een godsdienstpsychologische en mentaliteitshistorische studie naar mensvisie, zelfonderzoek en geloofsbeleving in het werk van Willem Teellinck (1579–1629)* ([s.l.] [Den Haag]: [2002]) 447.

³¹ See for an analysis of Calvin's ideas on these issues Dyrness W.A., *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture: The Protestant Imagination from Calvin to Edwards* (Cambridge: 2004) 62–89.

³² 'sy alleen Capabel bequaem ende geschickt is om in sich te ontfangen, de ghe daente van alle die dingen, die door de uiterlijcke sinnen besinnet worden; [...] als voor exemplel de coleuren daer mede d'ooghen sich besich houden; ofte de verscheyde stemmen, en ghelyuden, daer mede d'oore sich moeyt; [...] deze ghemeyne sin alleen beseft binnen in sich allerley besinnelijcke dinghen' ('she [the inner sense] is the only one capable of comprehending all the impressions of the outer senses, such as the colours seen by the eyes and the voices and noises heard by the ears; only the inner sense can contemplate on the interior experiences'), Teellinck Willem, *Adam*, in: *Het eerste stuk van de werken van Willem Teellinck : sijnde het eerste deel van sijne tractaten over sekere texten der H. Schrift / daer in de plaetsen der H. Schrift gestelt sijn na de nieuwe oversettinge ende de tractaten te voren gedruckt van nieuws sijn oversien ende van druck-fauten verb. door Theodorus ende Johannes Teellinck* (Utrecht: 1659) esp. 6, 63, 82–83; quotation on 82.

³³ See Teellinck Willem, *Aenhangsel aen de sleutel der devotie* (Utrecht, Hermannus Ribbius, Herman Specht and Janssonius van Waesberge: 1655), posthumously printed edition of a text written by Teellinck in between 1619 and 1624. See for more details Westerink, *Met het oog van de ziel* 443.

³⁴ See for an analysis of Augustine's thoughts on the matter for instance Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture* 19.

intellect should, according to Teellinck, be completely dedicated to the study of God's Word. And to comprehend fully what He has said, one should allow the imprints of His Word to enter one's mind.³⁵ The human eye should therefore not be focused on that which is visible, but on the Bible.

These strict Dutch Reformed opinions did limit the freedom of publishers and authors, but consumers were of course capable of making their own decisions in this matter. In an unillustrated copy of *De gulden harpe* (*The golden harp*) – a hymnbook by the Anabaptist Karel van Mander, first published in 1605 – a print is inserted with the caption 'Innocentes et recti adhaeserunt mihi' (Let perfectness, and righteous dealing wait upon me), a quote from *Psalm 24* in the Vulgate-translation [Fig. 2].³⁶ The print was made by Adrianus Lomelin, an engraver who worked in Ghent in between 1636 and 1663. Apparently this copy was used by a reader who was not content with the unillustrated character of this hymnbook.³⁷

Not only readers, but also authors tried various strategies to get around the theological and ideological barriers to the use of images order to produce illustrated religious literature in the Dutch Republic. A case in point is a Dutch translation of a treatise by Christopher Love, titled *Naackt vertoogh van den algemeenen schrickelicken dagh des oordeels, tot waerschouwinge voor alle christenen* (Plain Treatise on the Last Judgment, As a Warning to all Christians), dating from 1661.³⁸ Christopher Love, an English Puritan minister, had died as a

³⁵ Teellinck Willem, *Noodtwendigh Vertoogh aengaende de tegenwoordighen bedroevden staat van Gods volck* (Rotterdam, Pieter van Waesberghe: 1647) 123.

³⁶ The religious song culture in the Low Countries was devotional of nature ever since the movement of the Devotio Moderna had been active. The medieval roots of this culture have not been studied in great detail, but it most likely appears to have been a breeding ground for van Mander and others, see Hascher-Burger U. and Joldersma H., "Music and the Devotio Moderna", *Church History and Religious Culture* 88, 3 (2008) 313–328, esp. 320.

³⁷ Zie Mander Karel van, *De gulden harpe: inhoudende al de liedekens, die voor desen by K.V.M. gemaect, ende in verscheyden boecxkens uyt-ghegaen zijn, nu hier in tot een boeck versamelt, op den A.B.C. ende by hem selfs gecorrigeert. Een is noodigh. Vermeerderd met 't Broadt-huys, verscheyden liedekens ende ghedichten, die in de voorgaende niet gevonden en worden* (Haarlem, Hans Passchijs van Wesbusch: 1627) copy of the Ghent University, shelfmark BIB.BL.002038/1.

³⁸ The English source for this Dutch translation has not been traced, see Schoneveld C.W., *Intertraffic of the Mind: Studies in Seventeenth-Century Anglo-Dutch Translation with a Checklist of Books Translated from the English into Dutch (1600–1700)* (Leiden: 1983) 215.



Fig. 2. Print included in the front matter of Karel van Mander, *De gulden harpe: inhoudende al de liedecken, die voor desen by K.V.M. gemaect, ende in versheyden boecxkens uyt-gegaen zijn, nu hier in tot een boeck versamelt, op den A.B.C. ende by hem selfs gecorrigiert. Een is noodigh. Vermeerderd met 't Broodt-huys, versheyden liedecken ende ghedichten, die in de voorgaende niet gevonden en worden* (Haarlem: Hans Passchiers van Wesbusch: 1627). Image © Library of the Ghent University.

martyr in 1651 to serve as an example to the English Presbyterians, to warn them of what would happen to those who opposed Parliament in favor of Charles II.³⁹ Many of his sermons and treatises were translated into Dutch; and about thirty-five editions of this work appeared between 1651 and 1690. A 1661 edition *Naackt vertoogh van de dagh des oordeels* was enlarged with fold-out prints with bible illustrations. One of them featured all of the religious symbols detested by Voetius [Fig. 3]. The illustration is accompanied by a line of text, ‘voor de wtvercoorene van het gestrecken vonnis voltrecksel’, that was full of grammatical errors. Was it made by an English engraver who was not aware of Dutch sensibilities at the time? It can hardly have been a coincidence that the attempt to illustrate a devotional text was adapted from an English example, since Dutch approaches to the use of religious imagery were quite different at the time.⁴⁰

A Change of Tone around 1650

While the use of religious imagery remained beyond the reach of most Dutch Reformed poets, a new interest in the subject matter of ‘the passion of Christ’ emerged around 1650. As a number of poems written around that time show, the devotional and emotional dimensions of religious instruction could be enhanced using textual means. It is evident from Teellinck’s *Ecce Homo* of 1622, as well as from the popular treatise *De gecrucighe Christus, ofte XXXV texten van ’t lyden ende sterven Jesu Christi* (The crucified Christ, or thirty five texts on the Passion of Christ) first published in 1649, and written by the Groningen Dutch Reformed minister Johannes Martinus, that the change was not brought about by a new focus on the subject on the passion of Christ in itself.⁴¹ Didactic treatises on this subject were popular before 1650, and would remain popular long after 1650. The purpose of these treatises was, as indicated by the Dutch Reformed minister Franciscus Ridderus in his *Zevenderlei gezichten in de historie van het lyden en*

³⁹ See Kistler D., *A spectacle unto God: the life and death of Christopher Love* (Morgan, PA: 1994).

⁴⁰ See Watt T., *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550–1640* (Cambridge: 1991); and for Germany Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture*, *passim*.

⁴¹ The volume was reprinted in 1656 by Frans Brochorst in Groningen; in 1665 by Hieronymus Sweerts in Amsterdam; in 1698 by Baltus Boekholt in Amsterdam, and again in 1745 by Laurens Groenwolt in Groningen.



Fig. 3. Christopher Love, *Naackt vertoogh van den algemeenen schrickelicken dagh des oordeels, tot waerschouwinge voor alle christenen* (Middelburg, Adriaen Baldeus: 1661) Image © Library of the Utrecht University.

sterven onzes Heeren Jesus Christus (Seven scenes from the Passion of Christ), to learn from the example given by Jesus. According to Ridderus, ‘We should envision the suffering Jesus, so that we ourselves learn how to be suffering’.⁴² Ridderus was instructional and unemotional in tone, even when he wrote about the most touching episodes, which he reduced to bare descriptions, such as, ‘He was humiliated, he endured mockery, he suffered, and died willingly’.⁴³ Martinus was equally dispassionate in his *De gecrucycighde Christus*. When writing about Matthew 27:45–47, on the solar eclipse at the time of Jesus’ death, he first quoted the biblical verses, then went on to dissect them into little pieces, adding a number of explanations focused on the fact that the solar eclipse must have lasted for three hours, and was visible over the entire earth:

- A wonderful darkness was experienced for three hours; because he [Matthew] let us know*
- A. when it started: Now from the sixth hour*
 - B. what happened*
 - i. the actual effect, there was darkness*
 - ii. the place, over all the land*
 - C. and for how long, unto the ninth hour. v. 45.*⁴⁴

Martinus continues in this same disinterested tone of voice, including when he discusses the last words of Jesus on the cross ('My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me', Matthew 27:46). As he explains analytically, Jesus meant to address God – as all the faithful should – without any reproach. He simply posed a question 'concerning his fading feelings of divine love, of [spiritual] joy, and [heavenly] support on

⁴² ‘Dus moeten wy ons zelven den lydenden Jezus voor oogen stellen, op dat wy in onze ellenden ook goede lyders mochten worden’. Quoted in the third edition, Ridderus Franciscus, *Zevenderlei gezichten in de historie van het lyden en sterven onzes Heeren Jesus Christus: vertoonende: 1. De ontleding der texten. 2. Den sleutel der zwartigheden. 3. Het merg der historie. 4. Den spiegel der werelt. 5. De schole der deugden. 6. Den balsem der vertroostingen. 7. Het nabeeld der martelaren* (Rotterdam, Reinier van Doesburg: 1723) fol. *4r.

⁴³ ‘Hy leed verachtinge, hij verdroeg bespottinge, hij droeg smerten, hy ging gewil lig naer syn doot’. Ridderus, *Zevenderlei gezichten in de historie* fol. *3v.

⁴⁴ ‘Eene wonderbare Duisternisse gantscher drie uyren lang; want hy [Mattheus] meldt/ A. wanneer dit hebben begonnen: Ende van der sester uyre aen/B. watter zy geschiet, ten aensien i. van de sake self, wiert’ er duysternisse/ii. van de plaatse waer, over de geheele aerde/C. hoe lange dit hebbe geduyrt, tot de negende uyre toe. v. 45’, Martinus Johannes, *De gecrucycighde Christus, ofte XXXV texten van ’t lyden ende ster ven Jesv Christi* (Groningen, Jan Claessen: 1649) 525. The biblical verses are quoted in the King James Version.

account of his suffering unto death'.⁴⁵ There was in fact little difference between a sermon and a treatise like this.

The series of poems published around 1650 were also devoted to the subject of Christ's passion; but they approached the subject in a different manner.⁴⁶ The prestigious collection of poems titled *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* (Various Dutch Poems), published in 1651, contained quite a few of those new poems: Jeremias de Decker's *Goede Vrydag* [Good Friday], Franciscus Martinius' *Treur-gedicht, tot verklaringe over 't Lyden en Sterven van onsen Heere Jesus Christus* (*Elegy in Explanation of Christ's Suffering and Death*), Hugo de Groot's *Christelijcke betrachtinge des Lydens Christi* (*Christian Meditation on the Passion of Christ*), as well as a poem written by Caspar van Baerle, *Heylige aendacht op het Lyden van onsen Saligmaker Jesus Christus* (*Holy Meditation on our Savior's Passion*) and Constantijn Huygens' *Heiliche Daghen* (*Holy Days*), first printed in 1646.

As Jan Konst has argued, in at least one of the poems in this volume, *Goede Vrydag* by de Decker, new rhetorical techniques were used to evoke affective responses from the readers. An emotional and detailed description of the events, written in words but with the effect of a painting, served to repeatedly and aggressively appeal to the reader's sense of guilt.⁴⁷ As is evident from the preface to the volume written by the Remonstrant Geeraardt Brandt, this effect was purposely sought after by the authors through the use of visual language. Brandt dedicated the volume to the painter Geeraerd Pietersz. Syl, to whom he wrote:

Poetry, which is so similar to your Art of Painting, since the one is often painting with words what the other speaks through paint, now allows me to offer you poems in the place of painting and words in the place of colors.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ 'over 't onttrekken van 't inwendige gevoelen sijner godlickien liefde, vreuchde, hulpe, om 't lijden des doots'. Martinus, *De gecrucighe Christus* 530.

⁴⁶ This approach had been taken by another Dutch Protestant author, Jacob Revius, in his sonnet 'Hy droech onse smerten', published in 1630, but Revius' work was virtually unknown to Dutch readers. On this Protestant approach is written by Tümpel C., "Der Einfluss der Konfessionen auf die Kunst der Niederlanden", *Acta Universitatis Palackianae Olomucensis facultas philosophica. Neerlandica II. Emblematica et iconographia* (Olomouc: Olomouc University, 2003) 199–220, quotation on 214.

⁴⁷ See Konst J., "De retorica van het 'movere' in Jeremias de Deckers *Goede Vrydag ofte het Lijden onses Heeren Jesu Christi*", *De nieuwe taalgids* 83 (1990) 298–312, esp. 311.

⁴⁸ 'De Poësy, die sulck een groote gemeenschap met uw Schilderkunst heeft, dat d'eene dikwils met woorden schildert, en d'ander met verwen spreekt, geeft my nu

The readers are invited to step into these verbal paintings, to be spectators of Christ' suffering, following Calvin's opinion that the faithful should not identify themselves with Jesus (such as was the case in the Ignatian tradition) but rather should be witnesses of His passion.⁴⁹

Not only de Decker, but also all of the other poets whose work was gathered in the *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* meant to engage the readers in their writings by vizualing events in words. Even vivid descriptions of the author's emotions and suffering were meant to serve as a stimulus for the reader's faith.⁵⁰ The Dutch Reformed minister Martinius for instance maintained, in the preface to his 'Treurgedicht over 't lyden en sterven van onsen Heere Jesus Christus' to have dipped his pen into Jesus' blood in order to serve as a landmark for his readers:

It would be much better, O Lord, if you left me
 Staring at your cross, speechless;
 Or if you turned me into a post, as a pole or a road sign,
 Saying 'Behold this man', to everyone passing,
 Even if I could not speak.
 I would much rather turn my suffering into tears,
 If only those tears would be bloody as your sweat,
 Or my rhymes as red as your wounds,
 And my pen as sharp as your thorns,
 So that they would press upon my heart, out of mercy,
 What is left of your pitiful body.⁵¹

de gelegenheyt om uw E. Gedichten voor schildery en woorden voor verwen aen te bieden', *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* (Amsterdam, Lodewijck Spillebout: 1651) fol. *2r.

⁴⁹ See Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture* 76.

⁵⁰ See Dam-Heringa B. van, "Martinius, De Decker en Oudaan: drie gedichten over het lijden van Christus", *De nieuwe taalgids* 76, 5 (1983) 425–442.

⁵¹ 'Veel beter, Heere, waert, dat gy my onbesweken [=onverzwakt]/Liet eeuwigh op u Kruys staroogen [=staren] sonder spreken;/Of setten als een post [paal, wegwijzer] tot teiken aen de weg//Op dat ick, *Siet de mensch*, tot alle menschen segh//Of so ick niet en kon met seggen, of met swijgen//Veel liever selve smolt in tranen al mijn leet [veel liever smolt ik mijn leed tot tranen]//Indien myn water waer soo bloedigh als u sweet;/Of so men rymen vont so root als uwe striemen//En prickels hebben kon voor [=in plaats van] pennen, ende priemen//Mocht drukken endlyk uyt, met een melydent hert/Het overblyfsel noch [=althans wat overblijft] van uwes Lichaems smert', Martinius Franciscus, *Treurgedicht, tot verklaringe over 't Lyden en Sterven van onsen Heere Jesus Christus* (Amsterdam, Jacob Lescailje: 1649) fol. B1v–B2r.

In the work of Heymen Dullaert, an apprentice of Rembrandt, the word again prevailed over the image.⁵² Even though a painter himself, Dullaert only gave textualized images of Christ's passion:

Do go on, Lord! Behold your bloodied Son, And pour some of His blood from Your Throne of Grace, This blood, this precious blood with can save us from bleeding, Alas, it is too valuable! We are causing it to leak from the scourge.

Depart my soul! Flee to Golgotha where this blood is spread. There is in the Holy Blood a flood of holiness.⁵³

In this case, the author and reader are united in their expectations and desires, praying to be enforced by the Holy Spirit, in a style and vocabulary suitable for the expression of their faith, but that borders on the inappropriate in its focus on the bloodiest details of the Passion.⁵⁴ Word and Spirit are not sufficient; the blood of God's Son is needed to provide the soul's complete fulfillment. The soul is therefore exhorted to go to Golgotha to seek refuge in this blood.

The new visual approach to the subject of Christ's passion was highly appreciated by Dutch readers. The *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten* was reprinted in 1658 and 1659, and some of the poems contained in the volume were reprinted separately as well.⁵⁵ However visual in nature these poems became, these seventeenth-century editions were

⁵² Only a few of Dullaert's paintings remain, most likely because he never worked as an independent painter. See Pear T.H., *Remembering and Forgetting* (London: 1922) 83–86.

⁵³ 'Maar gaa wat verder Heer! zie uw bebloeden Zoon//En sprent wat van zijn bloet uit uw Genadetroon//Dat bloet, dat dierbaar bloet, dat ons van bloed kan hoeden//Ach 't is te kostelijk! wy lekken 't van de roeden./Ga heen mijn ziele! vlugt daar 't Golgotha verspreit./Daar is in 't heilig bloet de vloed der heiligeheit', in "Uitbreiding over het Tweede Liedt van het Gebedt onzes Heeren", Dullaert Heymen, *H. Dullaerts gedichten* (Amsterdam, Gerard onder de Linden: 1719) 18–19 and 21.

⁵⁴ The specifics of his language are discussed in Schenkeveld-van der Dussen M.A., and Vries W.B. de, *Zelfbeeld in gedichten: brieven over de poëzie van Jan Six van Chandelier (1620–1695)* (Amsterdam: 2007) 136–138.

⁵⁵ De Decker's poems were first reprinted in 1654, Decker J. de, *Goede vrydag ofte Het lijden onses heeren Jesu Christi*, ed. W.J.C. Buitendijk (Culemborg: 1978) 139; Martinus' *Treur-gedicht, tot verklaringe over 't Lyden en Sterven van onsen Heere Jesus Christus* had been published before; its first edition did not survive, the second edition appeared in 1649, by Jacob Lescailje in Amsterdam. De Groot's *Christelijcke betrachtinge des Lydens Christi* had been printed around 1620 without naming any printer's address, and was reprinted in 1631 in The Hague, by Anthony Jansz. Tongherlo. As to maximize the effect of the efforts made in the *Verscheyde Nederduytsche gedichten*, other religious, devotional poems by the same group of poets and some others were collected and published in 1658, in the unillustrated *'t Gebedt onzes Heeren, in*

not illustrated with pictures of the suffering Christ. In all eighteenth-century editions of these poems, however, illustrations were indeed added, suggesting a shift in the Protestant opinions on the use of religious imagery.⁵⁶ In the 1702 edition of de Decker's *Rijm-oeffeningen* for example, produced by Willem de Coup, Willem Lamsvelt and Philip Verbeek in Amsterdam, six fold-out bible illustrations were included, made by an anonymous engraver. Exactly the same engravings were reproduced in the 1726 edition entitled *Alle de rym-oeffeningen (Exercises with Rhymes)*, edited by Mattheus Brouërius van Nidek [Fig. 4]. The image of the bleeding, suffering Christ was not longer just to be visualized using textual means.

The 1726 edition included an extra engraving [Fig. 5] whose complex combination of scenes resulted in a more emblematic and allegorical representation of the biblical episodes discussed in the accompanying texts. A similar development can be seen in reprints of Franciscus Martinius' *Gedichten (Poems)*. The 1729 edition included a great number of illustrations based on compositions made by Karel van Mander, such as the *Mocking of Christ* [Fig. 6]. This volume was lavishly illustrated. Every scene of Christ's Passion was now depicted – an indication that Dutch Reformed conventions were becoming increasingly distanced from the strict opinions as expressed by Teellinck and Voetius during the first half of the seventeenth century. Depictions of biblical scenes had been problematic for Teellinck, because they testified to the fact that the artist's hands had been at work on them. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, publishers of Dutch Reformed religious texts appear to have overcomed these objections.

A Radical Change around 1680

This new habit of enhancing personal devotion through texts illustrated with images designed to clarify the faith as well as to facilitate its memorization and internalization, was rooted in developments that occurred around 1680. In 1678, the Amsterdam born poet and etcher

rijmen uitghebreidt. By verscheide liefshebbers der dichtkunste (Amsterdam, Abraham van Blancken, 1658).

⁵⁶ See for an overview of reprints of Jeremias de Decker, *Goede vrydag* 139; and Karsemeijer J., *De dichter Jeremias de Decker* (Amsterdam: 1934) bijlage III: De illustraties in de uitgaven van De Decker.



Fig. 4. Engraving in Jeremias de Decker, *Rijm-oeffeningen*. Amsterdam: Willem de Coup, Willem Lamsvelt and Philip Verbeek, 1702. Reproduced from Jeremias de Decker, *Alle de rym-oeffeningen*. Ed. Mattheus Brouërius van Nidek. (Amsterdam, David Ruarus, wed. Antony van Aeltwyk, Hendrik Bosch, Willem Barents, Hendrik Stockink and Adam Lobé: 1726), facing 234.
Private collection.



Fig. 5. Engraving in Jeremias de Decker, *Alle de rym-oeffeningen*. Ed. Mattheus Brouërius van Nidek (Amsterdam, David Ruarus, wed. Antony van Aeltwyk, Hendrik Bosch, Willem Barents, Hendrik Stockink and Adam Lobé: 1726), facing 215. Private collection.



Fig. 6. Franciscus Martinus, *Gedichten* (Den Haag, Jacobus de Jongh: 1729).
Image © Royal Library, The Hague.

Jan Luyken published an emblem book, *Jesus en de ziel* [*Jesus and the Soul*], as a direct continuation of the (religious) love emblems which were published in the Southern Netherlands during the first half of the seventeenth century. About two-thirds of Luyken's *picturae* can be traced back to examples from Vaenius' *Amorum Emblemata* and *Amorum Divini Emblemata*, Hugo's *Pia desideria*, and Benedictus van Haeften's *Regia via Crucis*. The fact that Luyken's work was firmly embedded within the existing emblematic tradition is acknowledged by Luyken himself, in the first sentence of the preface to *Jesus en de ziel*, 'No one, who has ever been in this court of emblems, believes that it all blossomed solely from our soil'.⁵⁷

In *Jesus en de ziel*, this search for God and the communion with His world is compared with the quest of the bride for her bridegroom in the Song of Songs. Luyken does not seem to seek intense sensory responses. His visual language lacks, for instance, references to bodily sensations such as bleeding, sweating and crying which could stimulate the readers' senses. Instead, the text offers a rather intellectual play with and for the reader's eye. Luyken's central theme is 'learning to see God', and this can be achieved by studying God's second book, nature, rather than, for example, by meditating on Christ's passion.⁵⁸ In Luyken's view the enhancement of the communication between God and the faithful could best be achieved, not by evoking emotions, but by stimulating the reader's intellect.

Luyken did not share Teellinck's assumption that the human eye should only be focused on the Bible, rather than on the visible world. Nonetheless, Luyken's choice of subject matter for his *picturae* was still highly selective. He did not include images such as this Crucifixion derived from van Haeften's *Regia Via Crucis* [Fig. 7], but rather restricted himself to the appropriation of Catholic *picturae* which were less devotional and emotional in nature. In Luyken's *picturae*, Jesus and the soul are depicted against seemingly realistic backgrounds,

⁵⁷ 'Niemand, die in het Hof dezer Sinnebeelden komt, dencke, dat al dese Bloempjes uyt onze eygen Grondt gewassen zijn', Luyken Jan, *Jesus en de ziel* (Amsterdam: 1685) fol. A3r. Quoted is the third, enlarged edition.

⁵⁸ Gelderblom A.J., "Binnen en buiten. Symboliek in de emblemen van Jan Luyken", *Jaarboek van de Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde te Leiden 1998–1999* (Leiden: 2000) 18–35. See for detailed analyses of the nature of the Catholic meditative literature in the Low Countries, and the way in which imagery contributed to its mediational qualities Melion W.S., *The Meditative Art: Studies in the Northern Devotional Print, 1550–1625* (Philadelphia: 2009).



Fig. 7. Benedictus van Haeften, *Regia Via Crucis* (Cologne, Ioanne Carolus Munich: 1673). Image © Library of the Utrecht University.

performing seemingly realistic activities that lack any specifically religious overtones.

Whether Luyken acted in such a way to avoid possible criticism, is hard to determine. Echoes of Teellinck's thoughts could still be found in theological treatises written by people with whom Luyken associated. Exemplary in this respect is Abrahamsz. Galenus' *Korte verhandeling van de redelyk-bevindelyke godsdienst* (*Short Treatise on the Rational-Pietistic Religion*). Galenus maintained that the senses are not to be trusted, and all their sensations should be ignored when one is trying to imitate Jesus.⁵⁹ Prayers and concentration on His Word are the most effective forms of devotional practice, according to Galenus. Following St. Paul, Galenus asserts that the 'enlightened eyes of the mind' should be one's guide.

An eighteenth century manuscript, in which Luyken's *picturae* of the *Jesus en de ziel* are copied and supplied with new texts, allows us to speculate on the nature of the restrictions. The manuscript, made by an anonymous writer, looks like a book, but was never published. It even has a title page that reads: *Verborgen leven der ziele met Christus* (*The Hidden Life of the Soul with Christ*).⁶⁰ The anonymous writer follows Luyken in great detail, emphasizing the central theme of 'seeing' even more so than Luyken had done. When we compare the *picturae* of emblem number 5 [Figs. 8 and 9] on which the soul is shown climbing up toward a cross, we can see that within the manuscript the mountain is pierced by a tunnel – which offers a view into another world, a visual play often used by Luyken himself in emblem books published after his *Jezus en de ziel*.⁶¹ The tunnel leads to a small road, which leads to the top of another mountain. On this road we see a man carrying a cross.

Interestingly enough, the anonymous writer not only enhanced visual experiences but also evoked and described other sensory responses as well. On Luyken's title page [Fig. 10], Jesus is shown, surrounded by a bright light, guiding the soul by some ribbons he is carrying in his one hand and a censer in his other hand. Judging by the smoke rising from it, appears to spread its vapors around the soul. In the manuscript, a

⁵⁹ Galenus A., *Korte verhandeling van de redelyk-bevindelyke godsdienst*. Uitgegeven en toegelicht door Henk Vekeman (Cologne: 1983). First printed (posthumously) in *Eenige nagelaten schriften* in Amsterdam in 1707, but circulating in manuscript form in the 1670s and 1680s in Luyken's circles (of Anabaptists and Collegiants).

⁶⁰ Shelfmark The Hague, Royal Library, manuscript, 133 M 129.

⁶¹ Stronks E., "Al kijkend reist de ziel naar God. 'Nieuwe plaaten' voor Luykens eerste religieuze embleembundel", *Nederlandse Letterkunde* 10 (2005) 161–175.

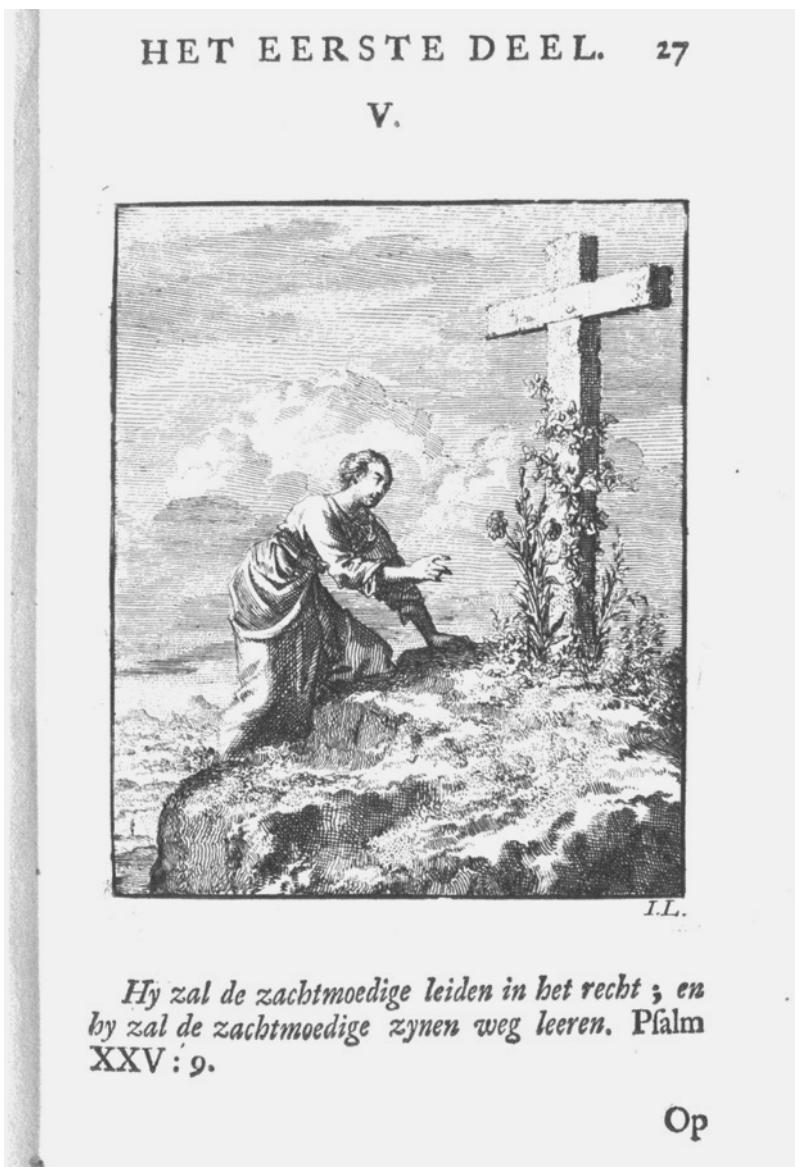


Fig. 8. *Pictura emblem 5, Jan Luyken, Jesus en de ziel* (Amsterdam, Pieter Arentsz.: 1685) 27. Image © Library of the Utrecht University.



Fig. 9. *Pictura emblem 5, Anonymous, Verborge leven der ziele met Christus.*
Image © Royal Library, The Hague.



Fig. 10. Title page of Jan Luyken, *Jesus en de ziel* (Amsterdam, Pieter Arentsz.: 1685). Image © Library of the Utrecht University.

globe is added to the image, to illustrate that the soul should leave all earthly matters behind to follow Jesus. This imitative behavior, visualized as a literal act of following, is depicted more emphatically in the manuscript, where the soul is now shown holding one of the ribbons, and thus as physically connected with Jesus.

The title page in the manuscript [Fig. 11] is accompanied by an explicit textual description in which the anonymous writer enumerates one by one, the sensations which should be evoked by his work. He hopes that Jesus' light will not only find the readers' eyes, but also their hearts. The mind of the readers should be enforced by the vapor rising from the censer, which is referred to as 'the priest's vessel', deriving its power from 'a coal of the fire of the heavenly altar'. God's power is not only seen, but also smelt, and felt, and should enter the furrows which have been dug into the heart. On the *pictura* the soul's chest is bare, as if to show that the incense and ribbon will find the way to the heart of the soul without barriers:

When the Light of Grace surrounds a poor Soul
 and Jesus' love sinks in deeper and deeper
 not only in the brain, or in the ears,
 but deep into the heart, in the furrows dug into it
 awakened by this Grace, one is eager
 to look around to find the genuine
 road to sanctification: it can be found without a doubt
 see how quickly the soul's lover is shown to her
 this is depicted in this title print
 you see here a chain that shows us how it binds her inner emotions
 first love comes to awaken her
 awakened she arises: so He will tow her
 filled with love and heavenly light
 the meaning of which is acknowledged more and more by the soul
 she will find comfort and hope as a result
 of rapidly following the soul's groom.
 in order not to make her tired, or weary
 he is strengthening her mind: this is shown by the priest's vessel
 which is filled with the sweet vapor of spices
 and these are spread around freely
 because it derives its smell and power of a
 coal from the heavenly altar and it is fed by the almighty God
 it is felt and tasted deep inside
 serving as an encouragement in the battle which has just begun.⁶²

⁶² Wanneer t genaaden Ligt een Arme Ziel omstraalt/en deese Liefde Trek, van Jesus, dieper daald/als slechts in t' breijn alleen, of in der sinnen ooren/maar sig



Fig. 11. Title page of Anonymous, *Verborgen leeven der ziele met Christus*.
Image © Royal Library, The Hague.

All the senses that were considered distracting and earth-bound by the Dutch Reformed and also by Anabaptists like Galenus, are engaged here by the anonymous author. These sensations reach a climax in emblem 40, where seeing, tasting, feeling and hearing collide: ‘this weak flesh, born from flesh, from Adam, must sweat to provide its daily bread, but the new spirit, fed by God’s Word, rests in peace’.⁶³

In conclusion

The cases of Teellinck and Voetius which I took as my point of departure, show that at least some Protestants in the Dutch Republic – contrary to what Barbara Kiefer Lewalski concluded on the basis of her study of the German, French and English situation – did not accept emblematic religious imagery as a God given form of symbolism.⁶⁴ The Dutch Reformed objections to the use of any images, including depictions of biblical scenes, dominated religious reading practices in the Dutch Republic for the majority of the seventeenth century.

The widespread interest in the Catholic legacy which arose amongst Protestant emblematists and their audience around 1680 must have been based on a tacit and newly reached agreement on the acceptability of religious emblematic imagery. The success of the religious emblems made by Jan Luyken serves to illustrate this development,

verdiept in ’t hert, in d omgeploegde vooren/in hijl lust [=heillust] opgewekt: den iver vind bereijd/om louter om te sien: in waare saligheijd/belust om t egte spoor: ontwijfelbaar te vinden/hoe haastig toond sig daar, die trouwen siel beminde/Dit schets dit tafareel, van deese titelprint/hier siet gij eene snoer: die wijst ons hoe t samen bind/ het innige gemoed: eerst komt ons liefde wekken/ontwaakt en staat sij op: soo wil hij voorts haar trekken/met liefde seelen: door een proef van t hemels ligt/waar in de geest al meer, ontdekt het groot gewigt/en dus ook meer getroost, om in een salig hoop/ den sielen bruijdegom, in iver na te loopen/op datse niet beswijkt: en haast wierd afgemat/versterkt hij haaren geest: dit toond het priester vat/gevuld met soeten geur: van diebre specerijen/die sig aan alle kant: wijdlustig heene spreijen/na diense door een kool: van ’s hemels altaarvier/haar geur en kragt ontlaat: en in gods albestier/geoeld word en gesmaakt: gedrongen diep na binnen/waar in gemoedigd om den strijd, nu te beginnen’, *Verborge leven der ziele met Christus* fol. 2r.

⁶³ ‘dit brosse vlees, uit vleesch geboren: uit adam, sweet om t aardse brood/maar t nieuw gemoed, gevoed van t horen: rust salig uijt’, *Verborge leven der ziele met Christus* fol. 145v.

⁶⁴ See Lewalski B.K., *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric* (Princeton: 1979) 185, enforced in Dyrness, *Reformed Theology and Visual Culture* 255.

and it seems to have been announced by a turn toward the visual in Passion lyrics even before 1680. There were certainly limits to the process of appropriation of the Catholic religious emblem, but as the eighteenth century set in Bible illustrations established a firm presence in Dutch religious literature, and even the religious emblem flourished in forms and shapes that Teellinck could have never imagined.

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